"An intense, visually stunning, and gritty whodunnit." — THE NERDY BASEMENT

DEVIL'S HIGHWAY VOL. 2

Benjamin PERCY Brent SCHOONOVER Luca Pizzari Nick FILARDI

AWA UPSHOT

WRITTEN BY
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ISSUE 1 ART BY
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ISSUES 2-5 ART BY
SCHOONOVER & LUCA PIZZARI

COLORS BY
NICK FILARDI

LETTERS BY
SAL CIPRIANO

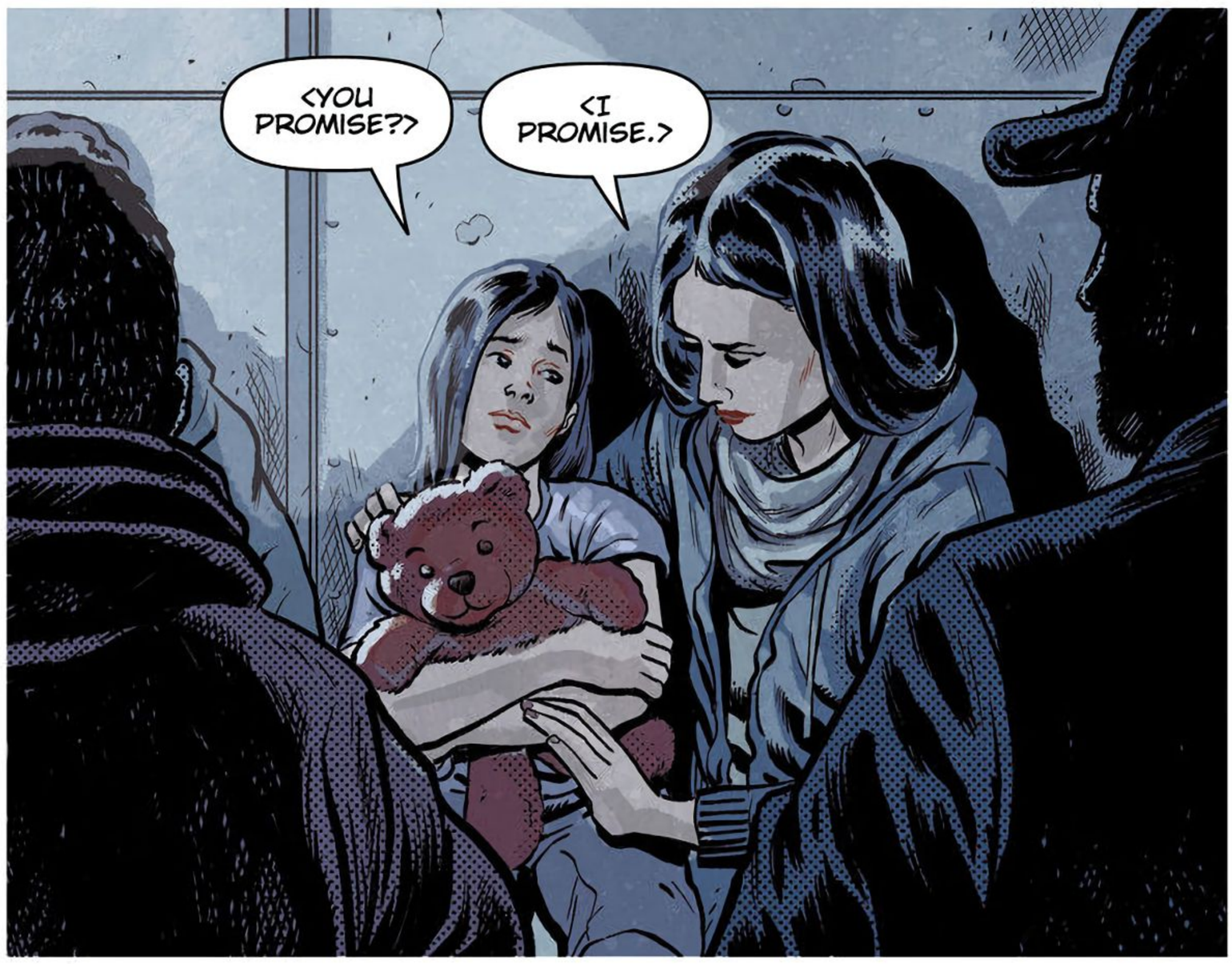
COVERS BY
SCHOONOVER & FILARDI

<I'M SCARED...>*
*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.

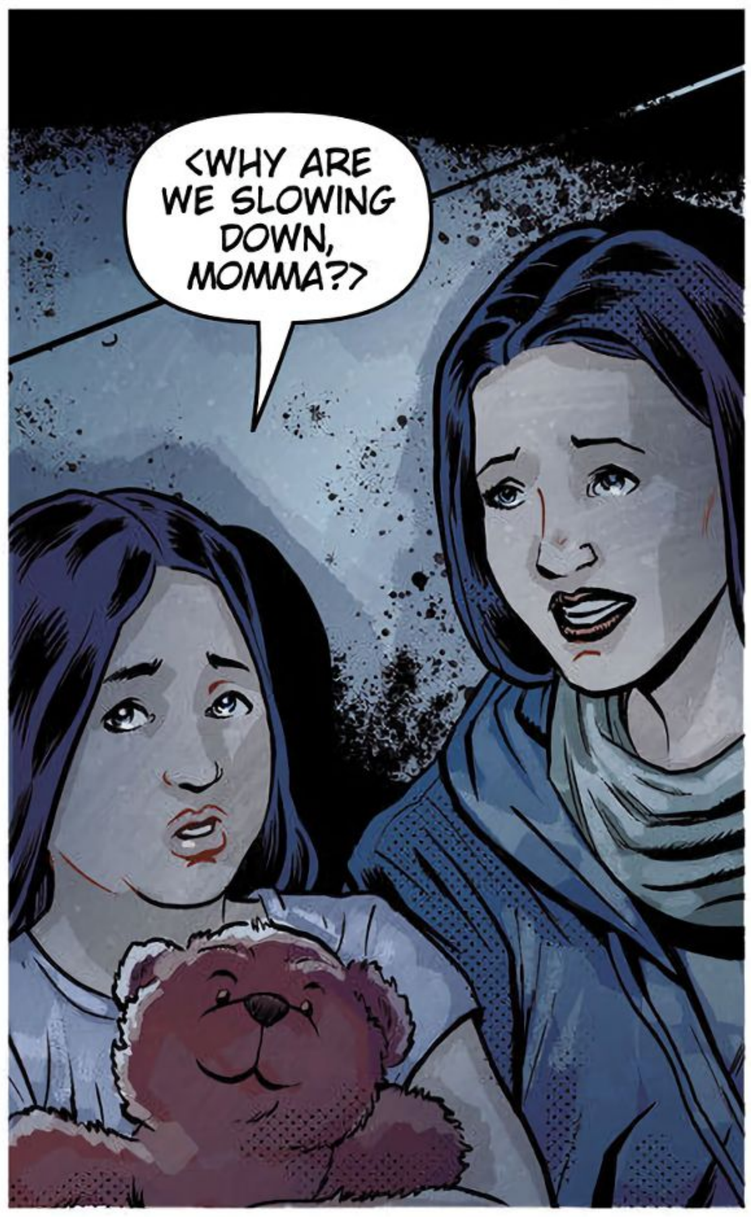
<I'M REALLY, REALLY SCARED.>

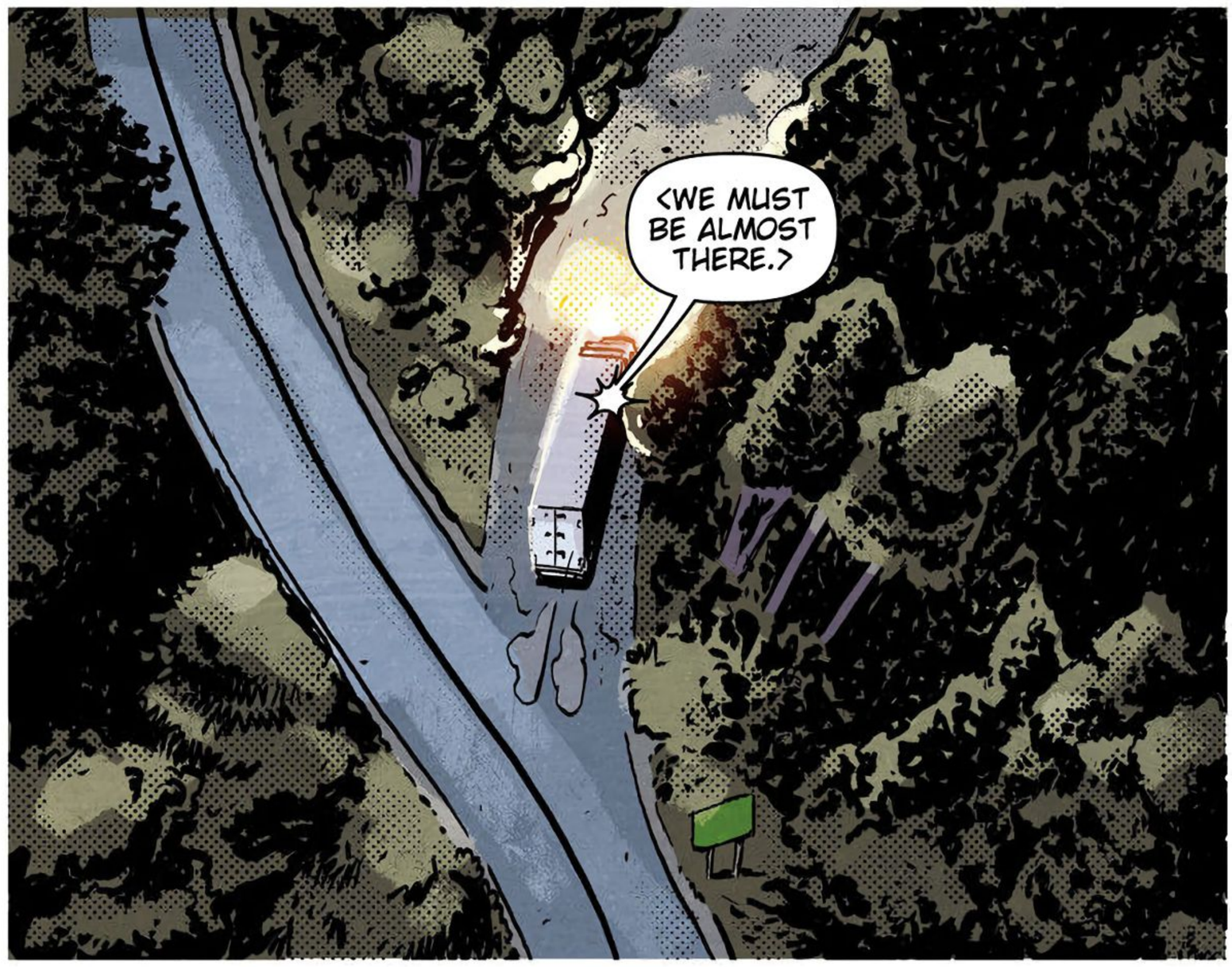
<SHHH. IT'S OKAY.>

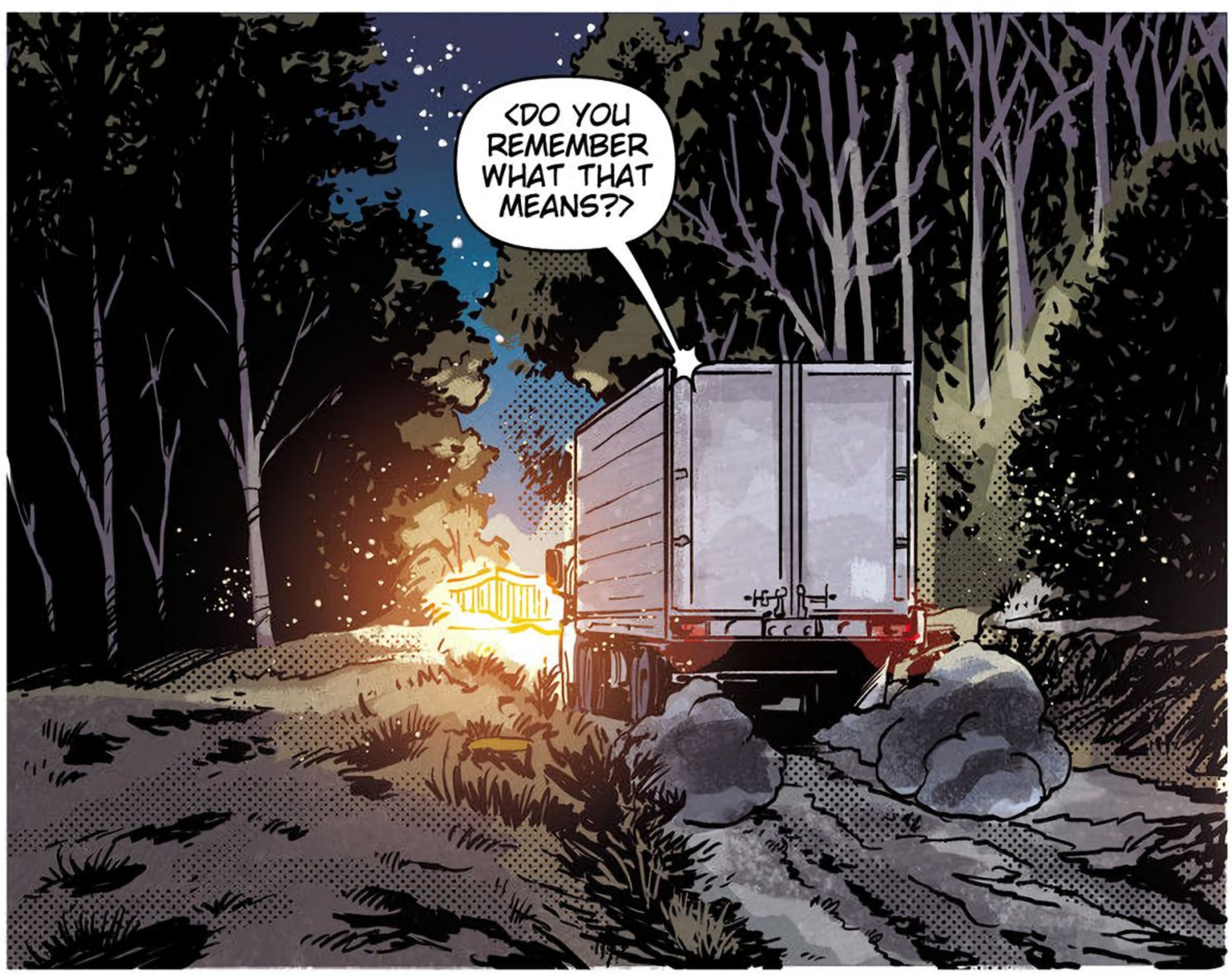
<THERE'S NO REASON TO BE SCARED.>


<YOU PROMISE?>
<I PROMISE.>

<WE'RE ABOUT TO START A NEW LIFE.>
UNITED STATES BORDER 10 MILES
ALL VEHICLES SUBJECT TO INSPECTION

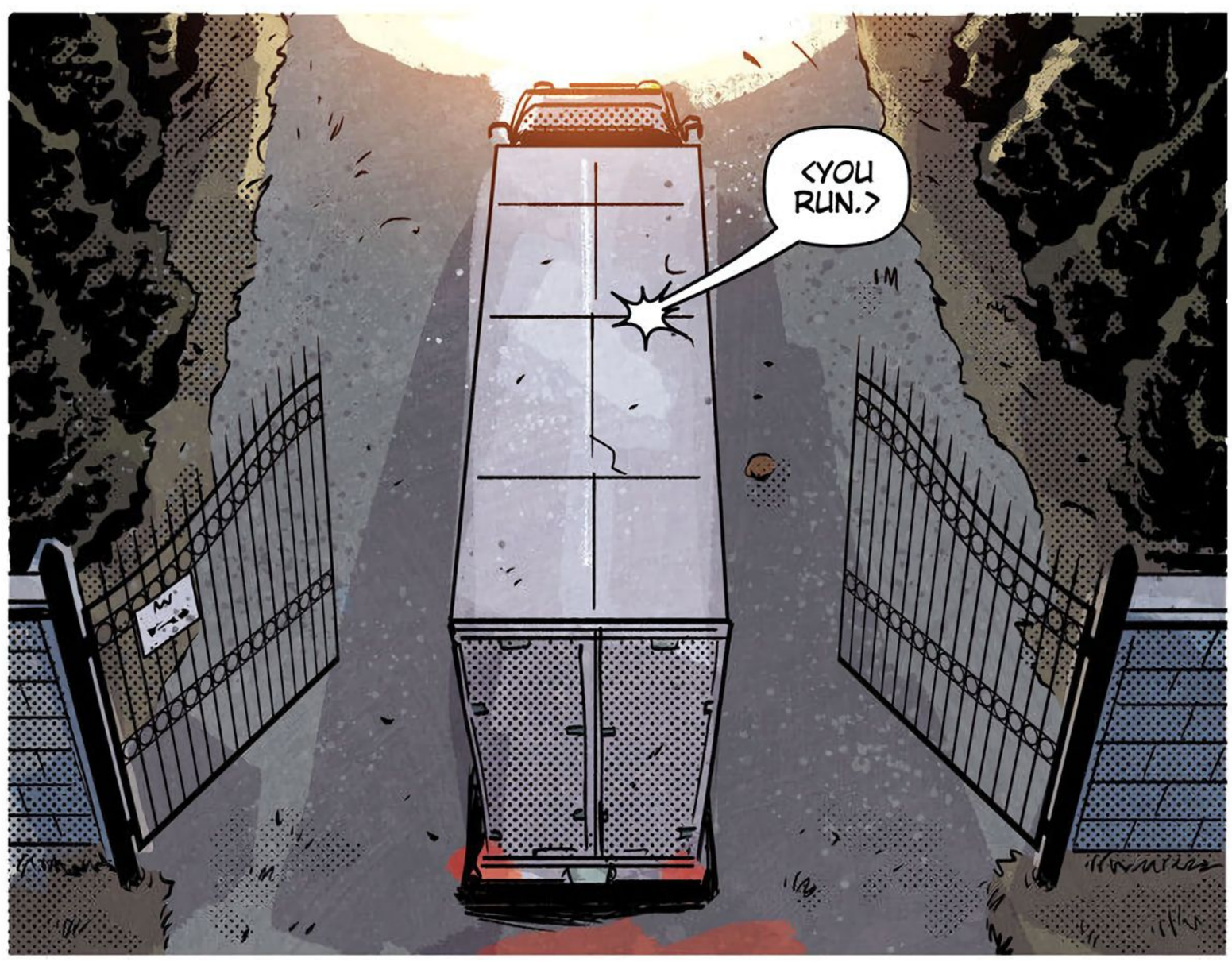

<WHY ARE WE SLOWING DOWN, MOMMA?>

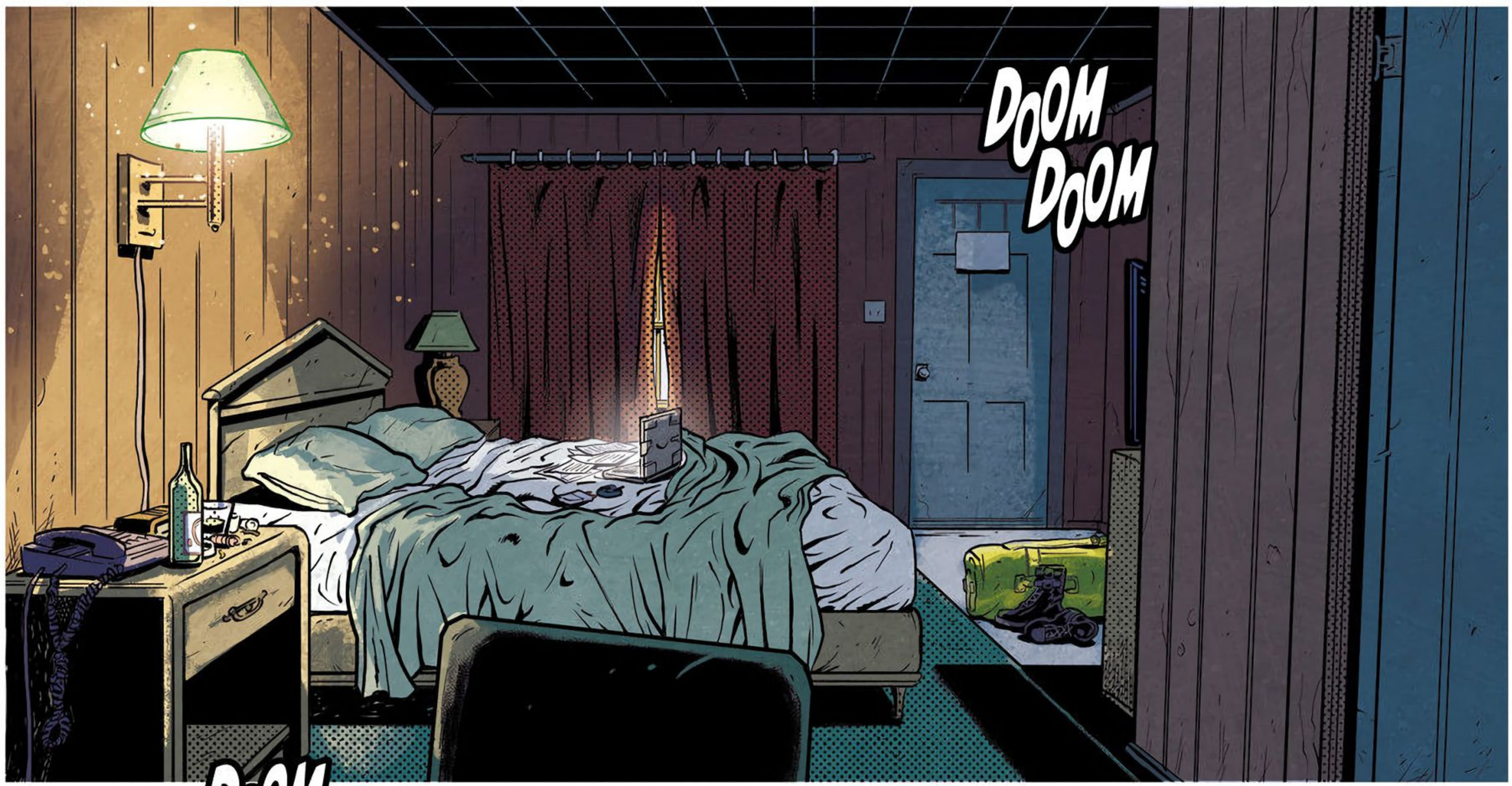

<WE MUST BE ALMOST THERE.>

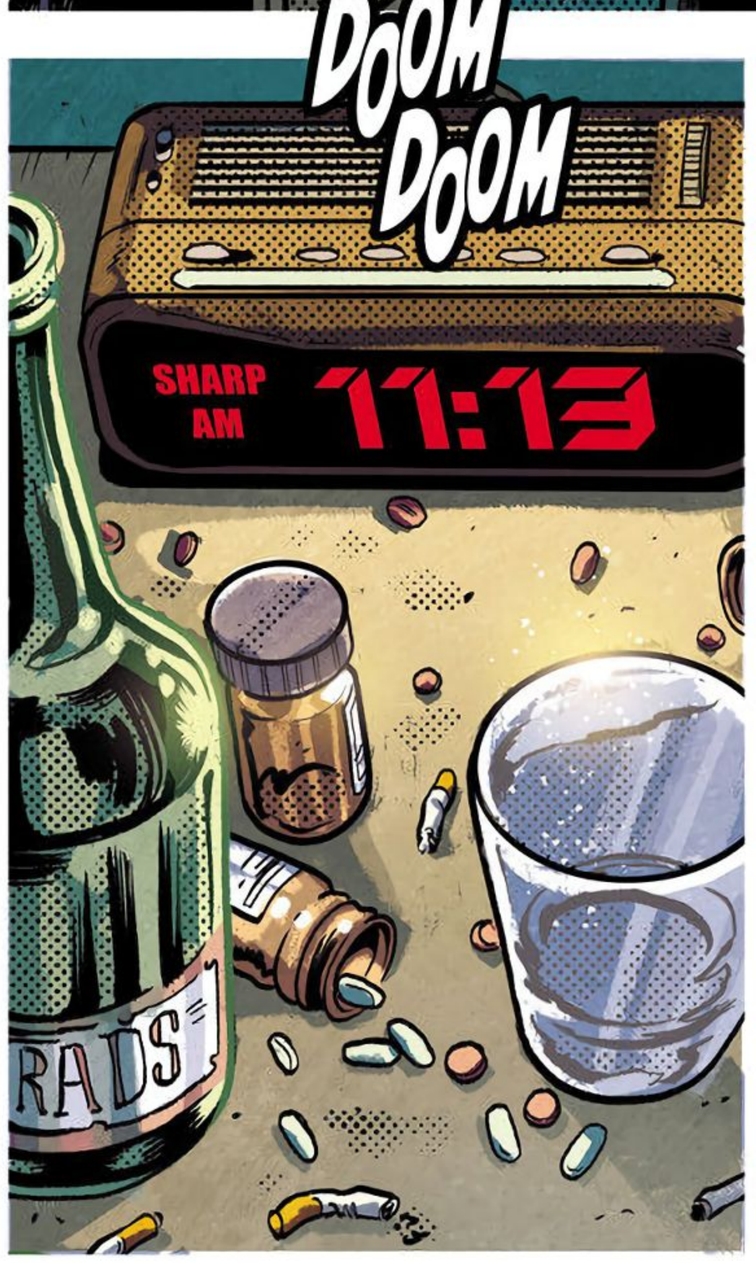

<DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT THAT MEANS?>

<THAT MEANS WE SHOULD BE VERY, VERY QUIET.>

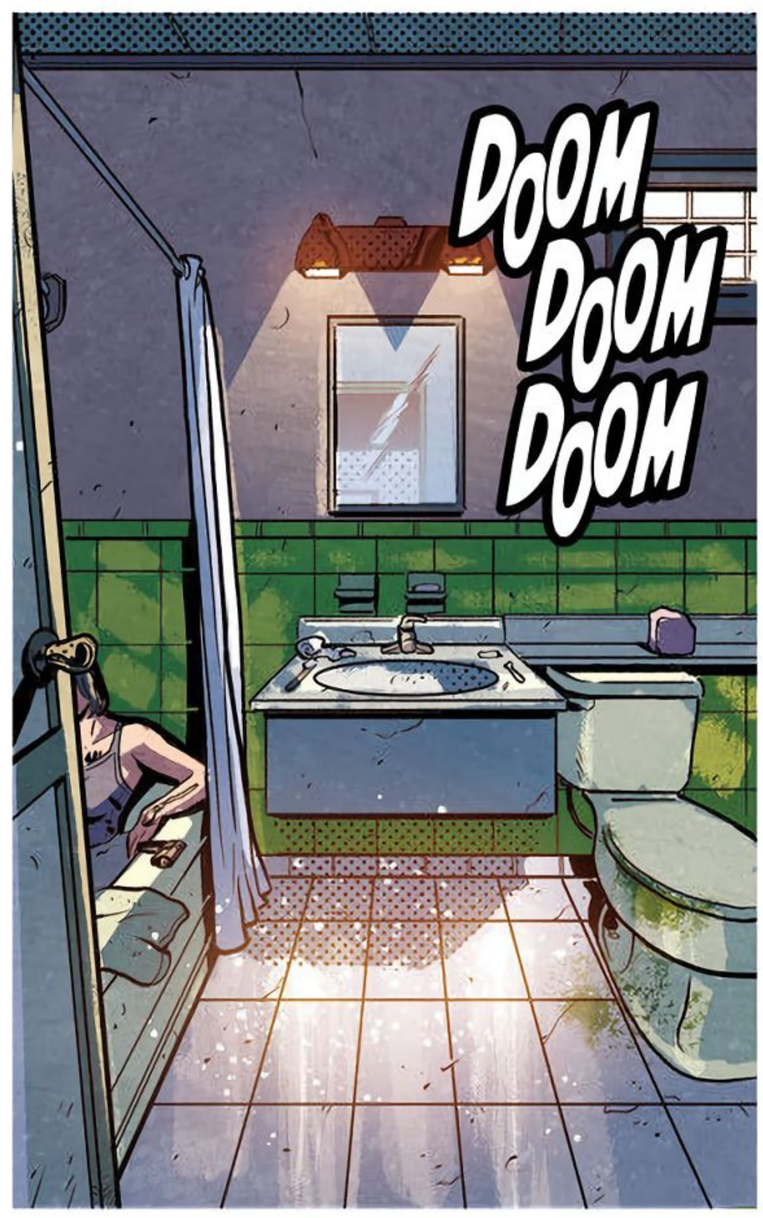
<BUT IF SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS--WHICH IT WON'T--BUT IF SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS...>
NO TRESPASSING


<YOU RUN.>


DOOM
DOOM


DOOM
DOOM
SHARP
AM
11:13
RADS

PERCY'S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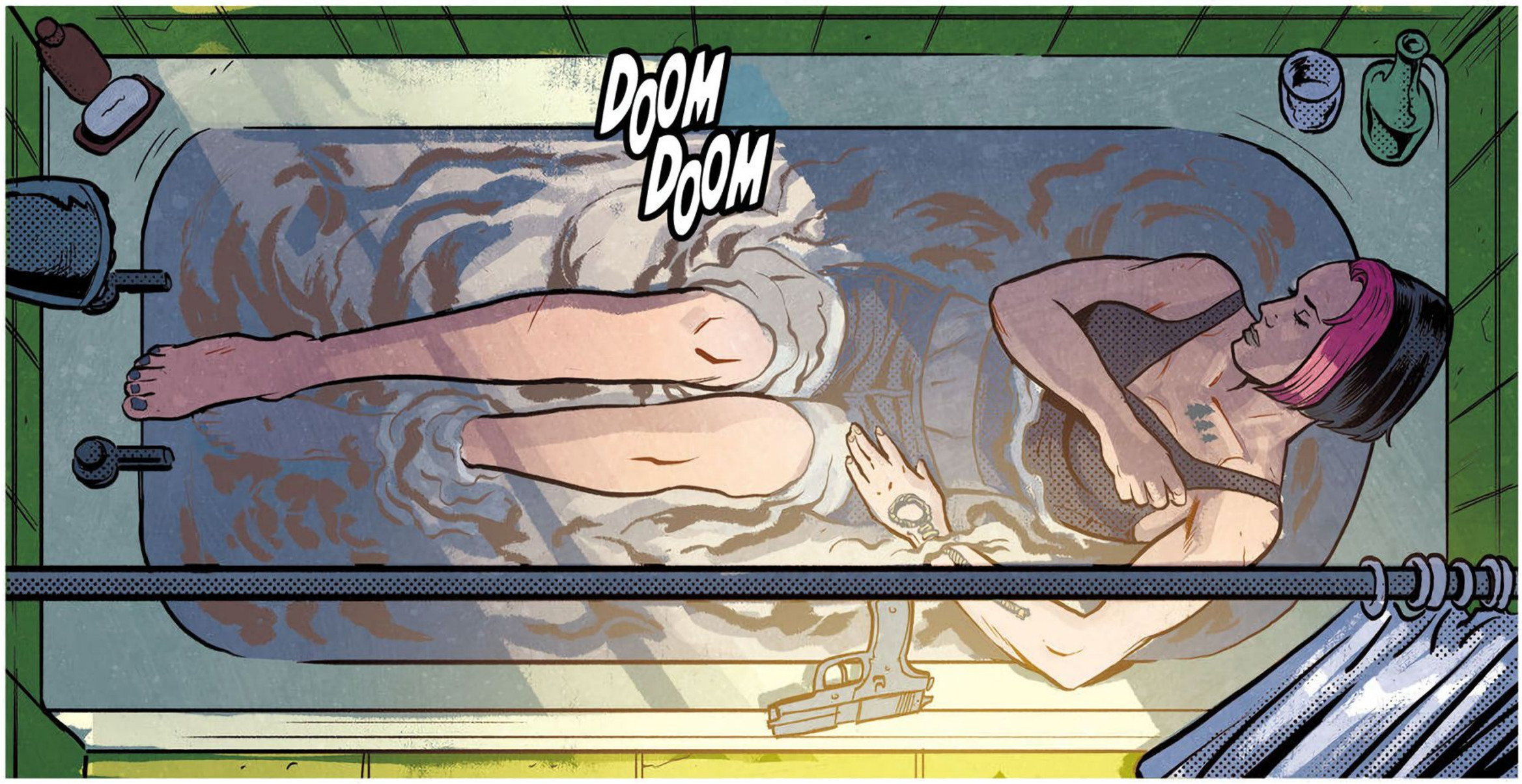
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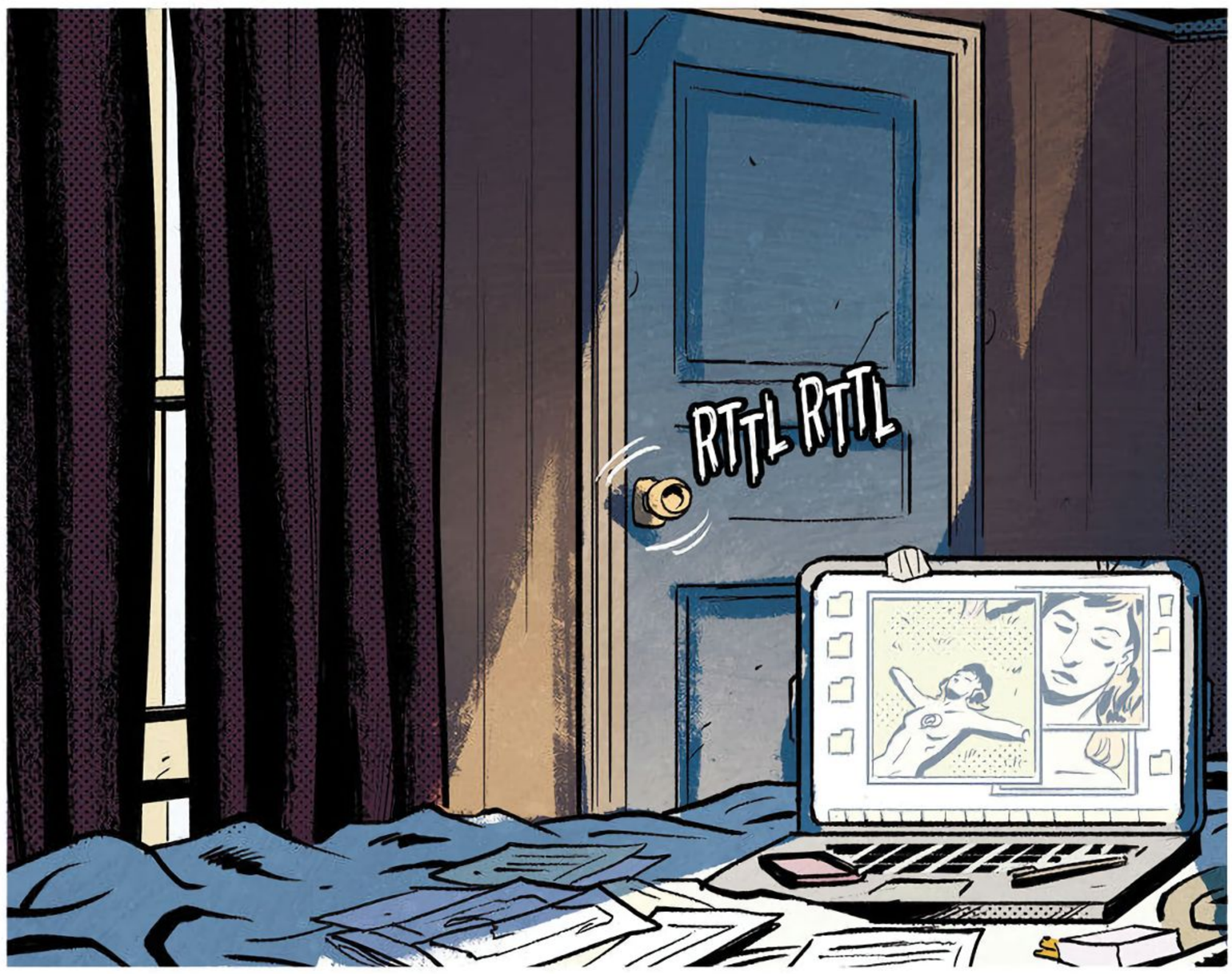
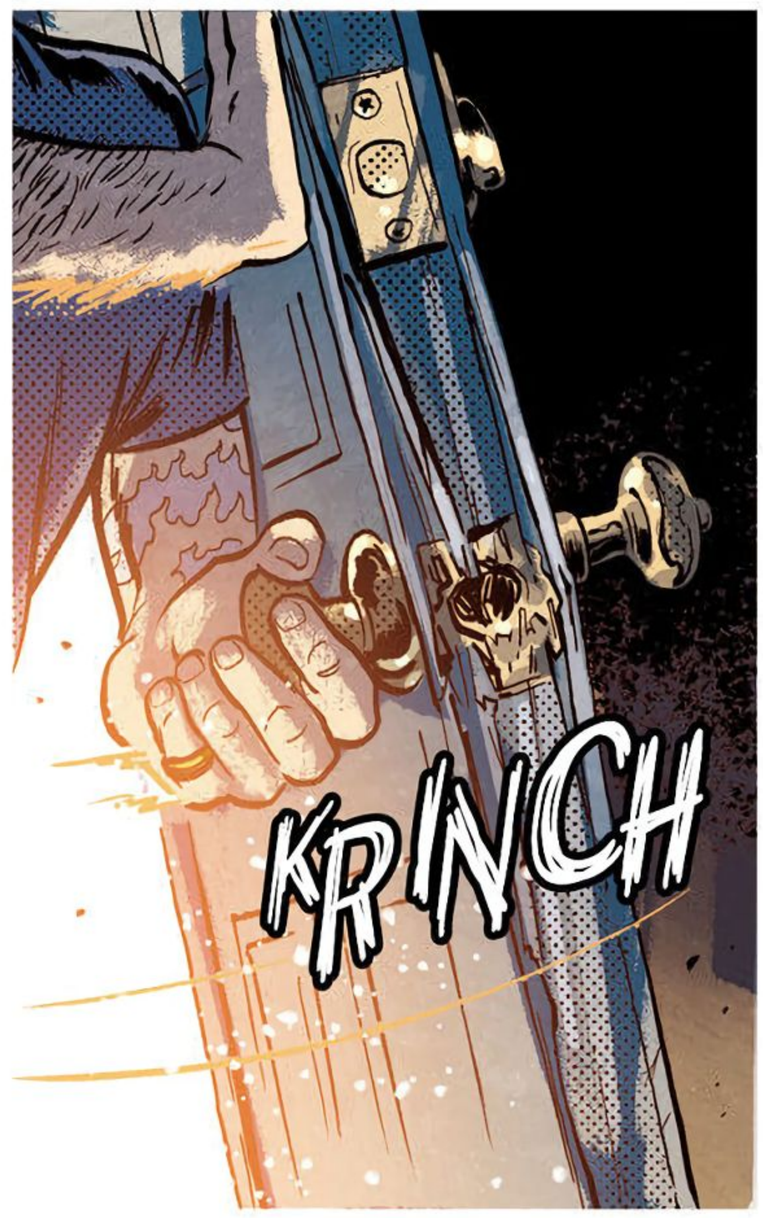
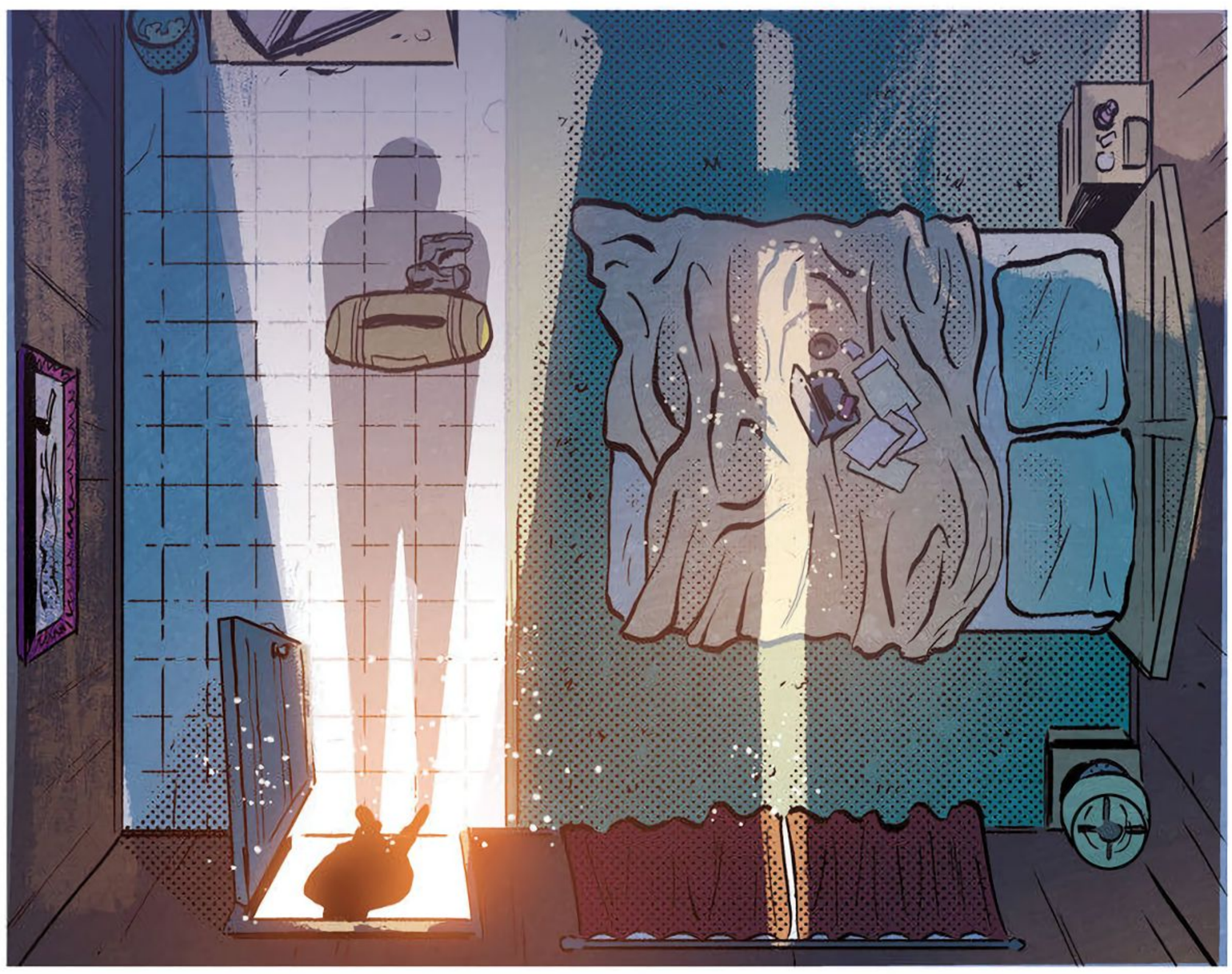
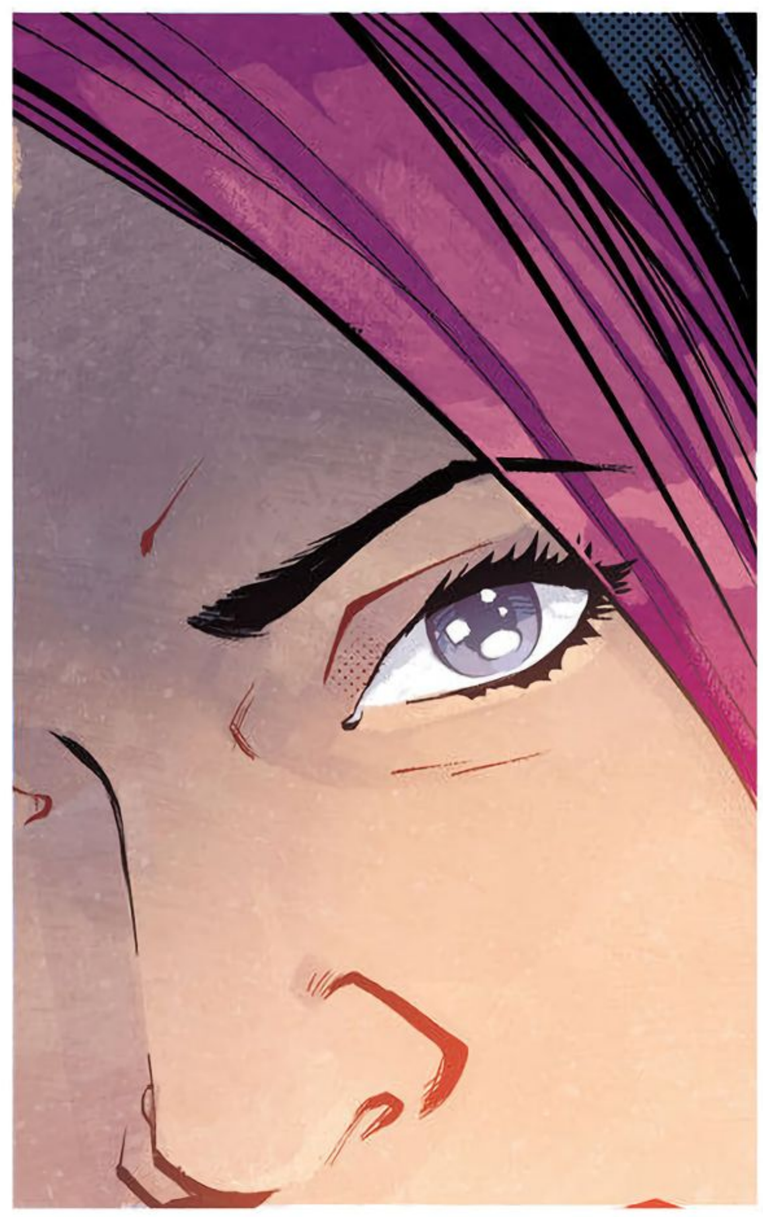
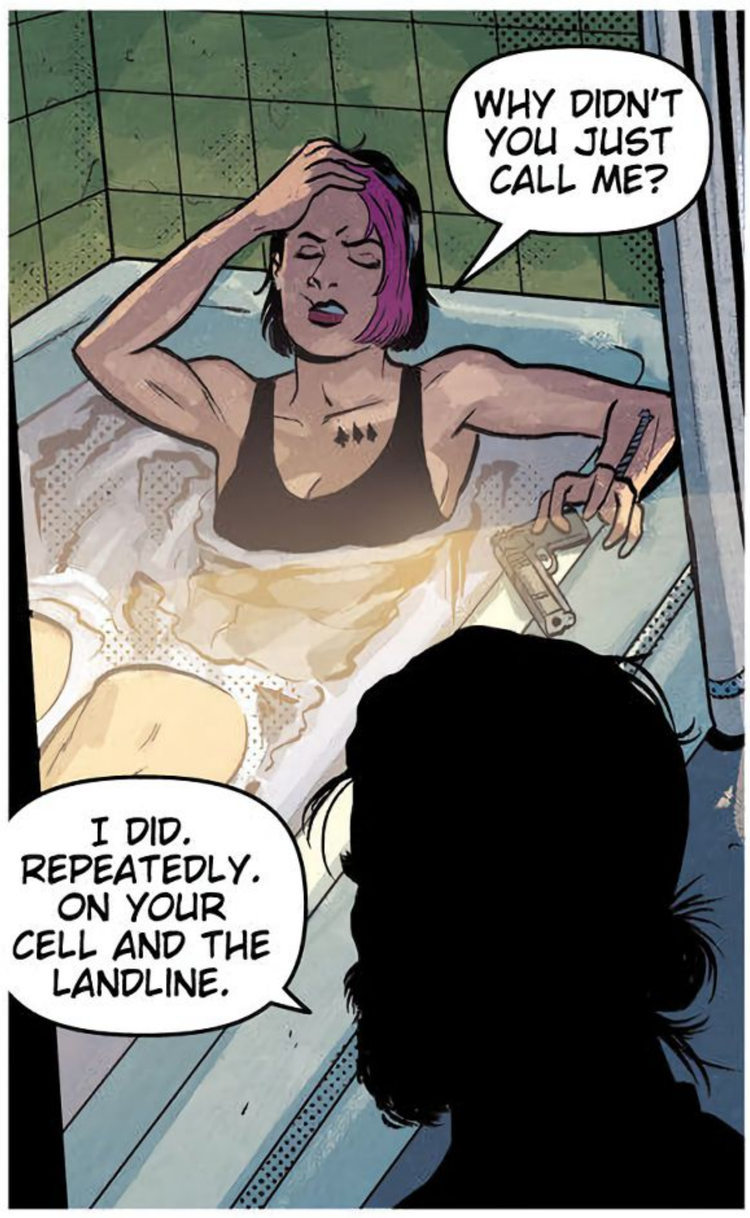

RTTL RTTL


KRNCH





GOOD TO SEE YOU TOO.


WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST CALL ME?
I DID. REPEATEDLY. ON YOUR CELL AND THE LANDLINE.

LET ME HELP YOU UP.
FREEZING.

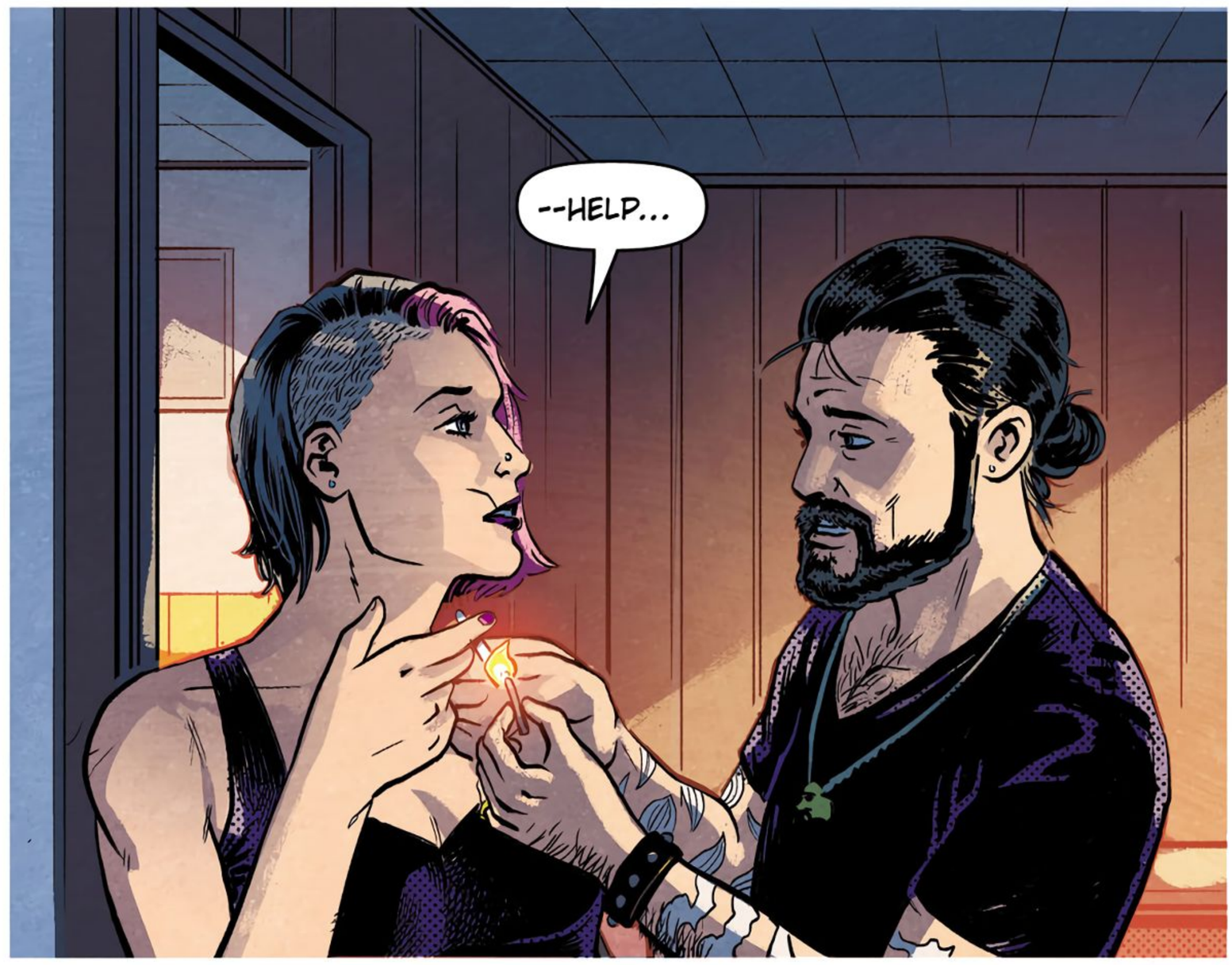
DID YOU BREAK ANOTHER DOOR?
THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE IN TROUBLE.

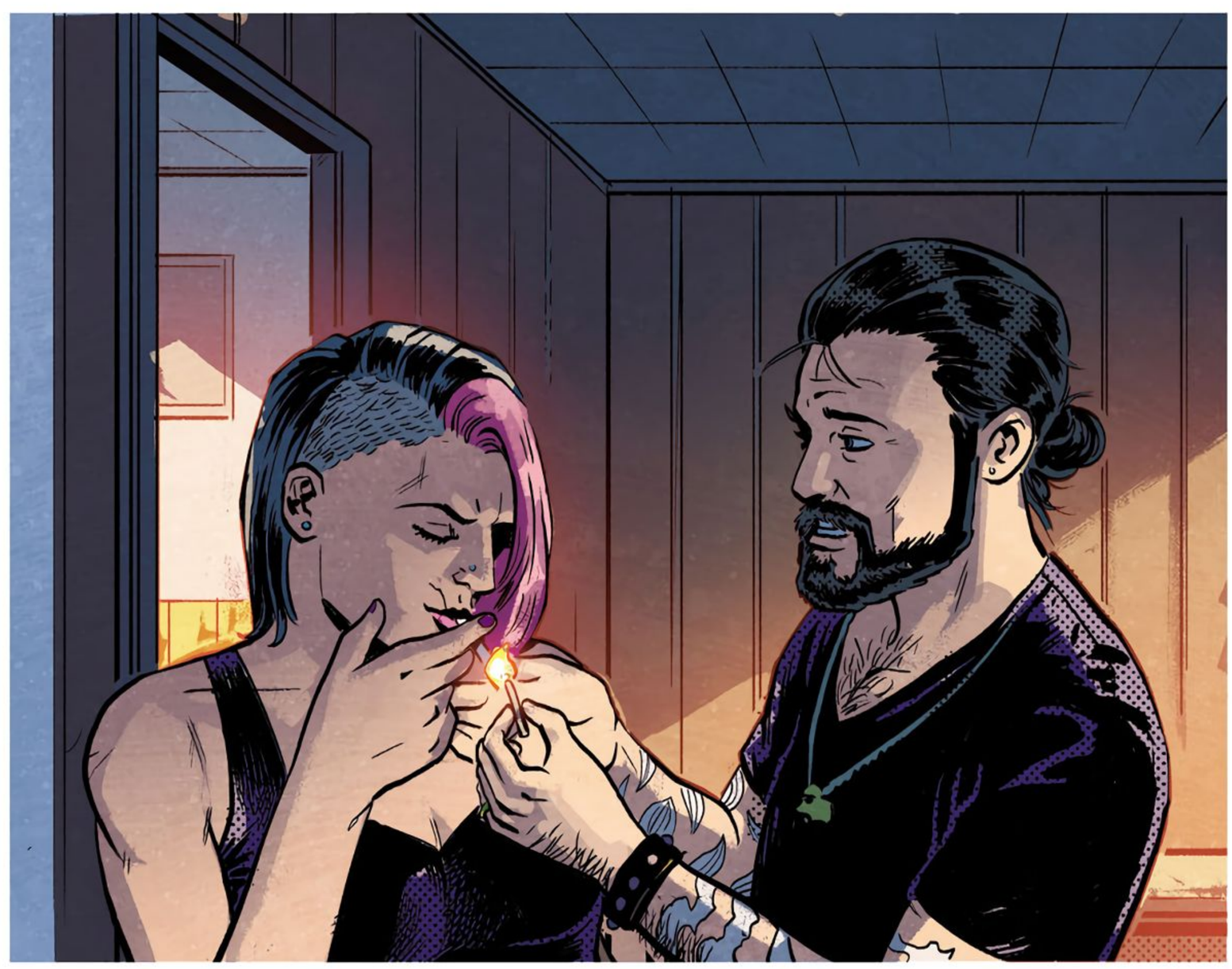
I WAS RIGHT.
FUCK OFF. I'M FINE.

HEY. LOOK AT ME.
THIS HAS GOT TO STOP.

YOU'RE ONE TO TALK.
I BEEN DRY FOR FIVE MONTHS.
CHK CHK
FUCKING THING.

HEY.
I SAID I'M NOT LOOKING FOR--


--HELP...



TOLD YOU BEFORE, SKINNER.
YOU CAN GO YOUR OWN WAY ANY TIME YOU FEEL LIKE IT.

I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE. NOT WHILE WE HAVE WORK TO DO.

GET DRESSED.
SOMETHING'S HAPPENED.

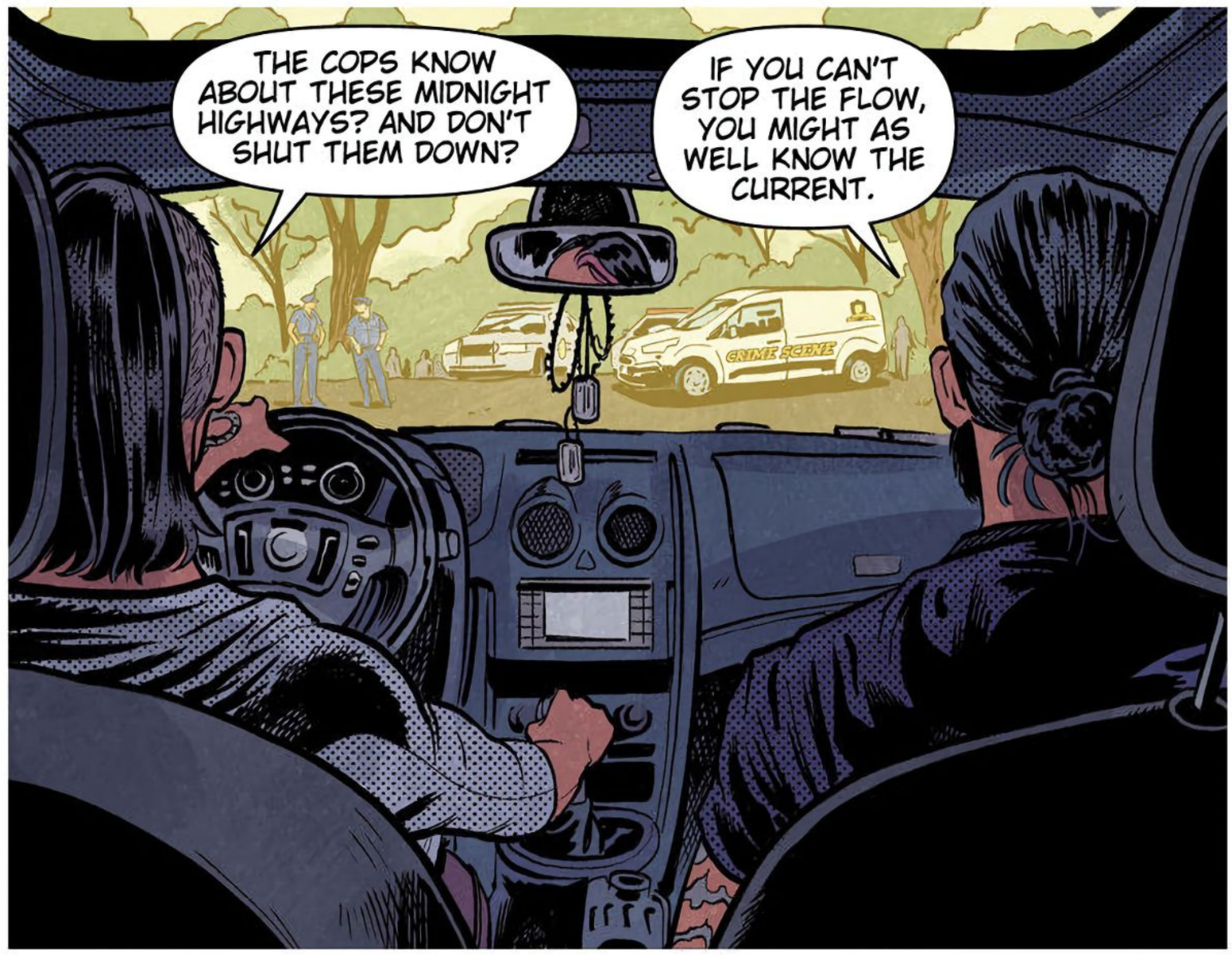
WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MIDDLE OF FUCKING NOWHERE.

YOU SURE WE'RE GOING THE RIGHT WAY, SKINNER? I'VE GOT NO SIGNAL.

MINNESOTA. COOK COUNTY. THIRTY MILES SOUTH OF THE US/CANADIAN BORDER.

SIGNAL DOESN'T MATTER. MAPS DON'T MATTER. THE ROAD WE'RE ON DOESN'T EXIST.

IT'S CALLED A MIDNIGHT HIGHWAY.

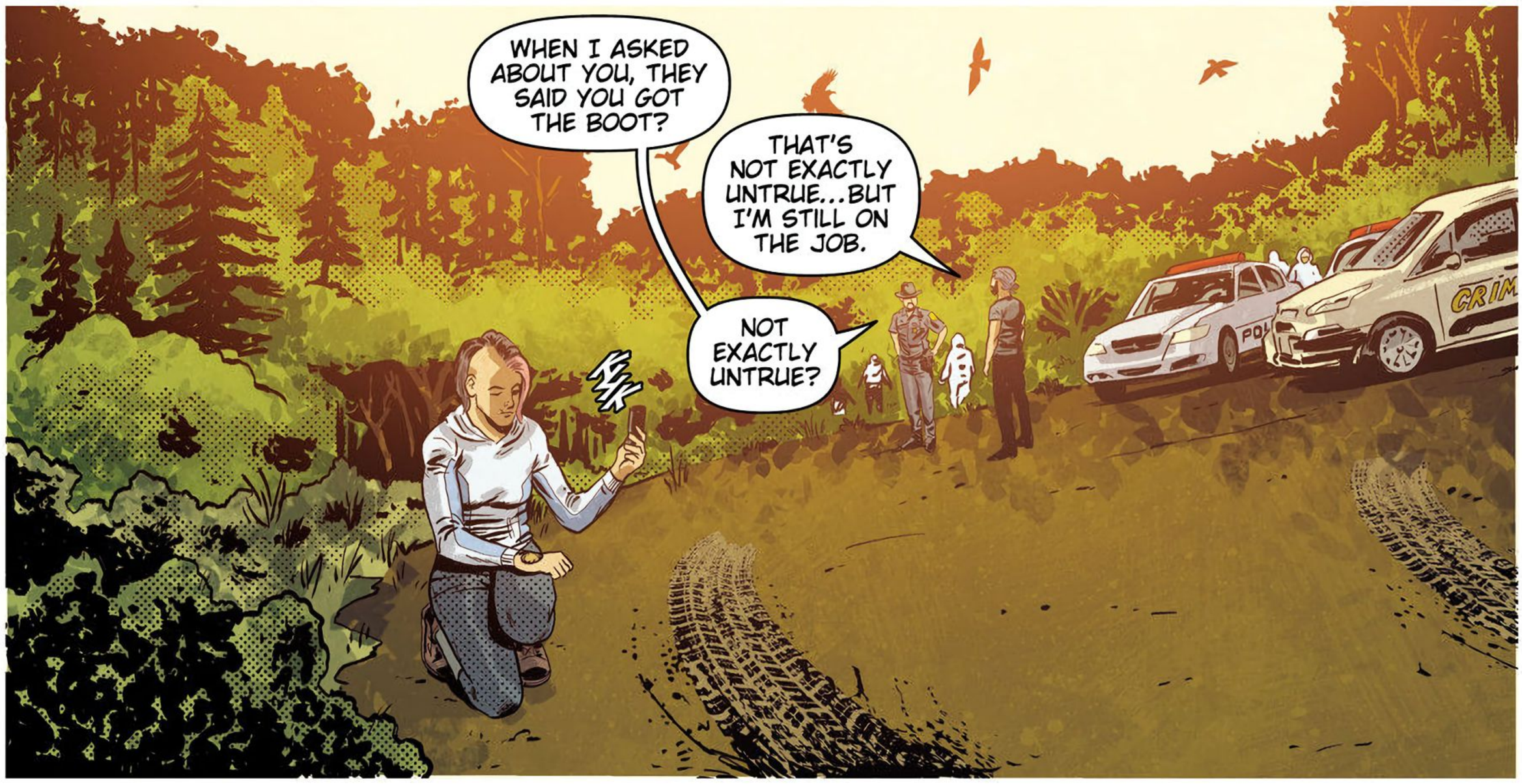


WHO IS THIS GUY?
WHEN I WAS WITH THE BUREAU, ME AND SHERIFF RIFT WERE IN CONSTANT CONTACT. HE KEEPS ME IN THE KNOW.

HOW BAD IS IT? THAT YOU WOULDN'T GET INTO ANY DETAILS ON THE PHONE?
WORST KIND OF POISON I EVER PUT IN MY EYE.

BUT BEFORE WE GET INTO THAT...

I TRIED YOUR OFFICE EARLIER...AND SOMEBODY ELSE PICKED UP.
RIGHT. ABOUT THAT--


WHEN I ASKED ABOUT YOU, THEY SAID YOU GOT THE BOOT?
THAT'S NOT EXACTLY UNTRUE...BUT I'M STILL ON THE JOB.
NOT EXACTLY UNTRUE?

IT'S COMPLICATED.
YOU CAN IMAGINE I MIGHT FEEL A LITTLE WORRIED? ABOUT INVITING YOU UP HERE TO STOMP ALL OVER MY CRIME SCENE?

HOLD ON...SHERIFF... YOU'RE SICK?
WHAT...WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. IS IT CANCER?
KEEP YOUR GODDAMN VOICE DOWN.

WHO TOLD YOU THAT? I AIN'T TOLD NOBODY NOTHING OUTSIDE MY FAMILY.

YOU KNOW ME. YOU KNOW I CAN--
DON'T START IN ON THAT SPOOKY SHIT.
YOU KNOW I CAN *FEEL* THINGS.

CAN YOU FEEL...IF I'M GOING TO BE OKAY?
HERE...

TAKE ONE.

WHAT'S THAT MEAN? IS IT GOOD?

IT'S REAL GOOD.

THANK YOU, QUENTIN.
EVEN IF IT IS JUST A BUNCH OF NONSENSE... IT HELPS.
LET ME HELP THESE PEOPLE TOO. LET ME--

SHERIFF!
GUS? THE HELL HAPPENED TO YOU?

I ASKED HER WHO SHE WAS AND SHE WOULDN'T TELL ME, SO I TOLD HER SHE HAD TO GO, BUT SHE WOULDN'T GO, AND THEN I GRABBED HER AND SHE-- SHE--
YEAH, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT.

SHE DOESN'T LIKE TO BE TOUCHED.

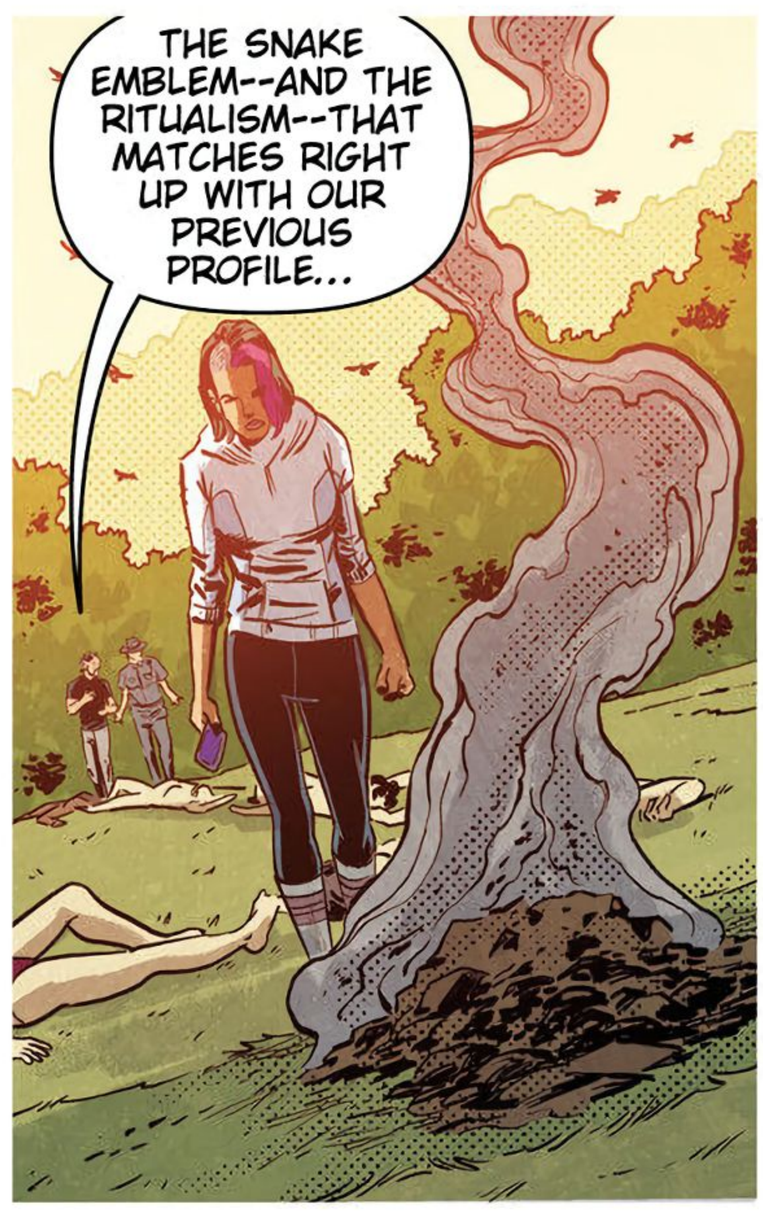
"A HUNTER REPORTED THE BODIES.
"SAID HE COULD HEAR THE CROWS A MILE OFF AND JUST KNEW SOMETHING AWFUL WAS WAITING.
"HE WAS RIGHT."

WHO IS SHE?
SHE'S... SPECIAL.

JESUS.
YEAH...

YOU SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE, SKINNER?
NO.

NOT LIKE THIS.
THIS IS BIGGER.


THE SNAKE EMBLEM--AND THE RITUALISM--THAT MATCHES RIGHT UP WITH OUR PREVIOUS PROFILE...

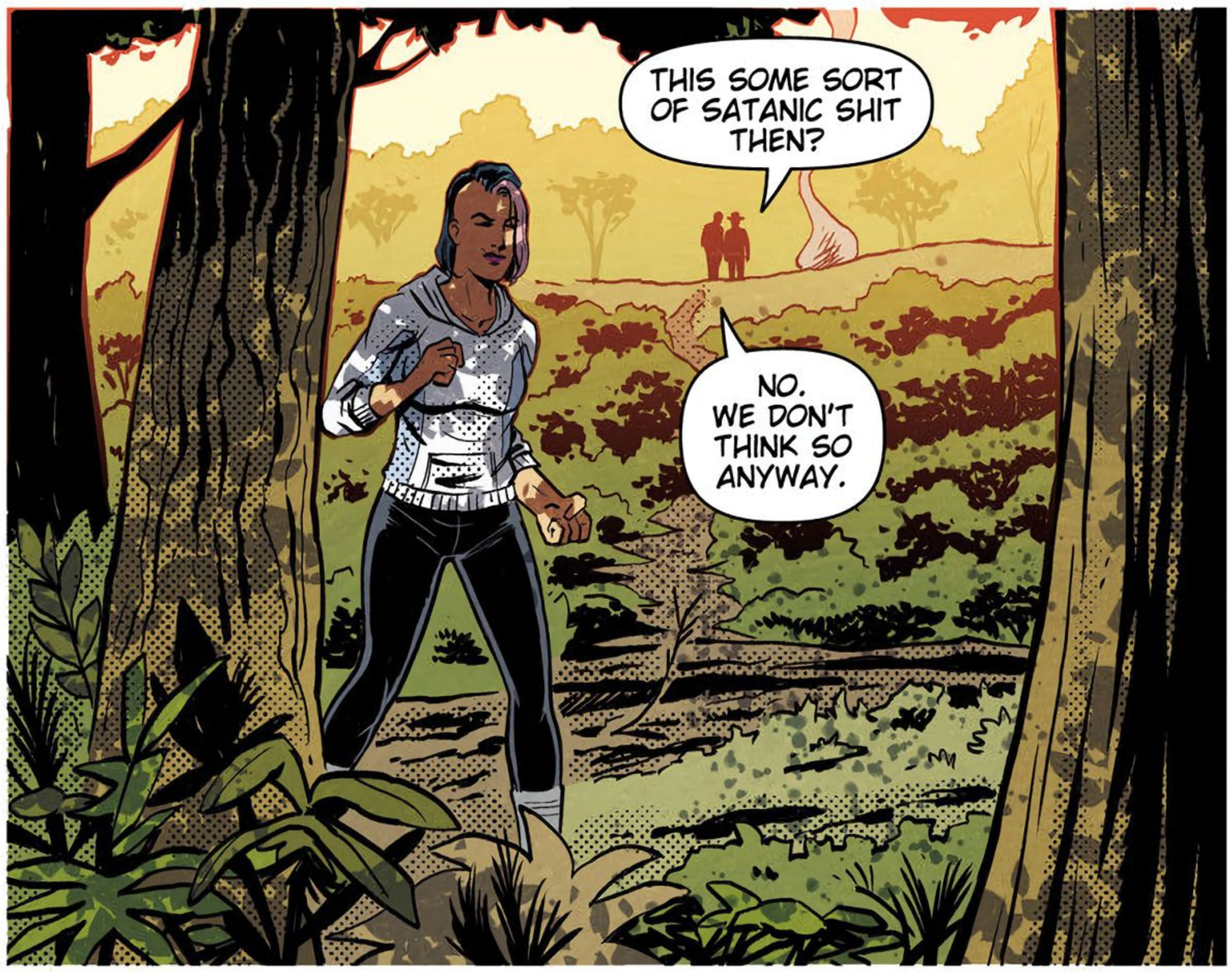
BUT ONE THING THAT STANDS OUT RIGHT AWAY IS THE BODIES THEMSELVES.
OUR PREVIOUS VICS WERE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY YOUNG WOMEN. SEX WORKERS.

THEIR TEETH WERE PRIED OUT, THEIR HANDS SEVERED TO PREVENT IDENTIFICATION.
THEIR VULNERABILITY AND INVISIBILITY MADE THEM DISPOSABLE.

LOOK AT THESE BODIES. AT A GLANCE WE'VE GOT MEN AND WOMEN, VARIOUS AGES, VARIOUS ETHNICITIES.
WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?

CONNECTION IS THEY CAME OFF THE BACK OF THE SAME EIGHTEEN-WHEELER. YOU KNOW HOW MANY FOLKS GET TRAFFICKED THROUGH HERE.
YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOCK THE TEETH OUT OF SOMEBODY WHO AIN'T IN THE SYSTEM. THEY'RE ALREADY INVISIBLE.

READYMADE VICS. DELIVERED IN A STEEL TRAILER LIKE A BIG CAN OF TUNA TO POP A KNIFE INTO.


THIS SOME SORT OF SATANIC SHIT THEN?
NO. WE DON'T THINK SO ANYWAY.

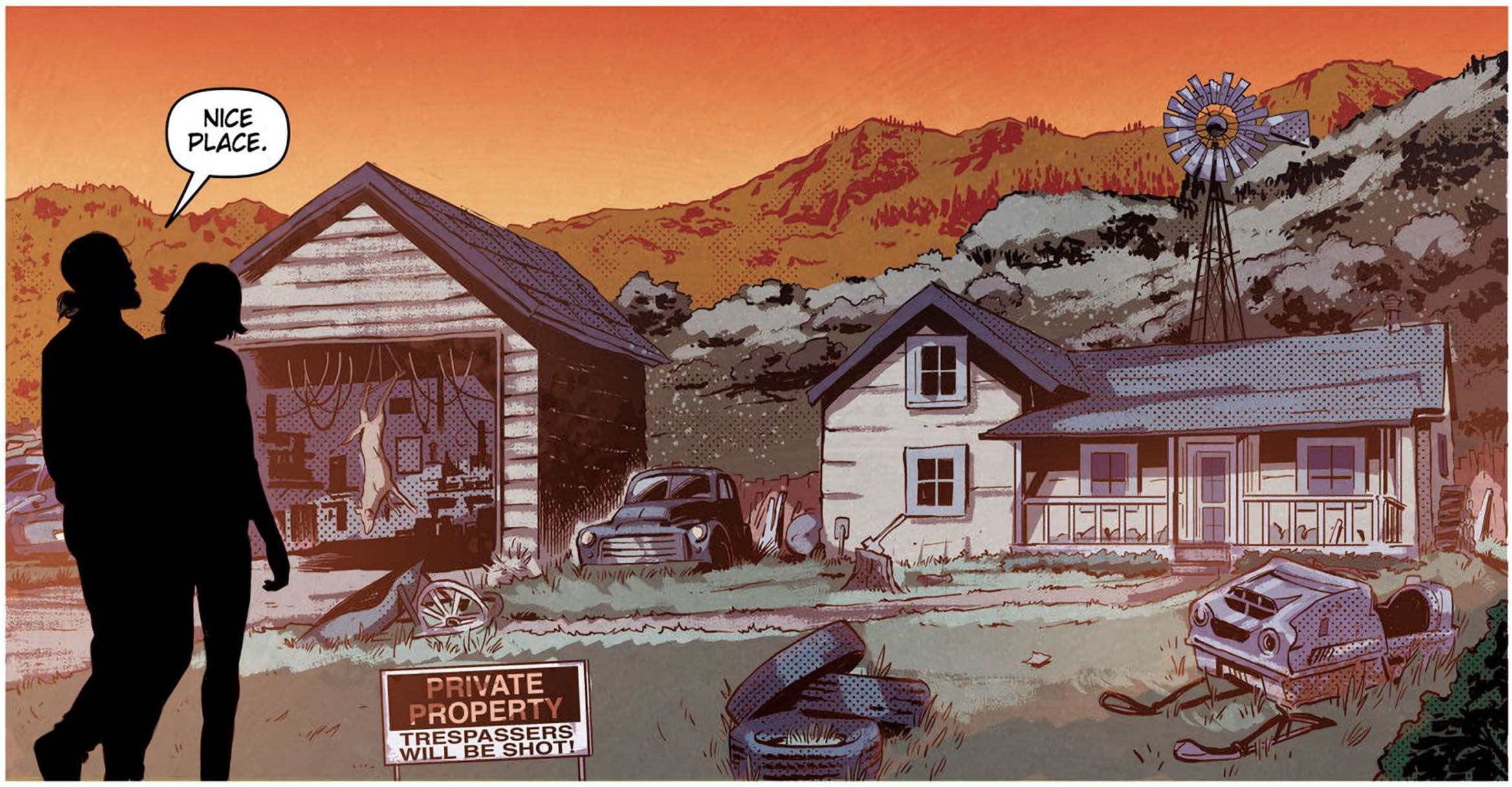
IT DOESN'T APPEAR TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH JUDEO-CHRISTIAN CONSTRUCTS.

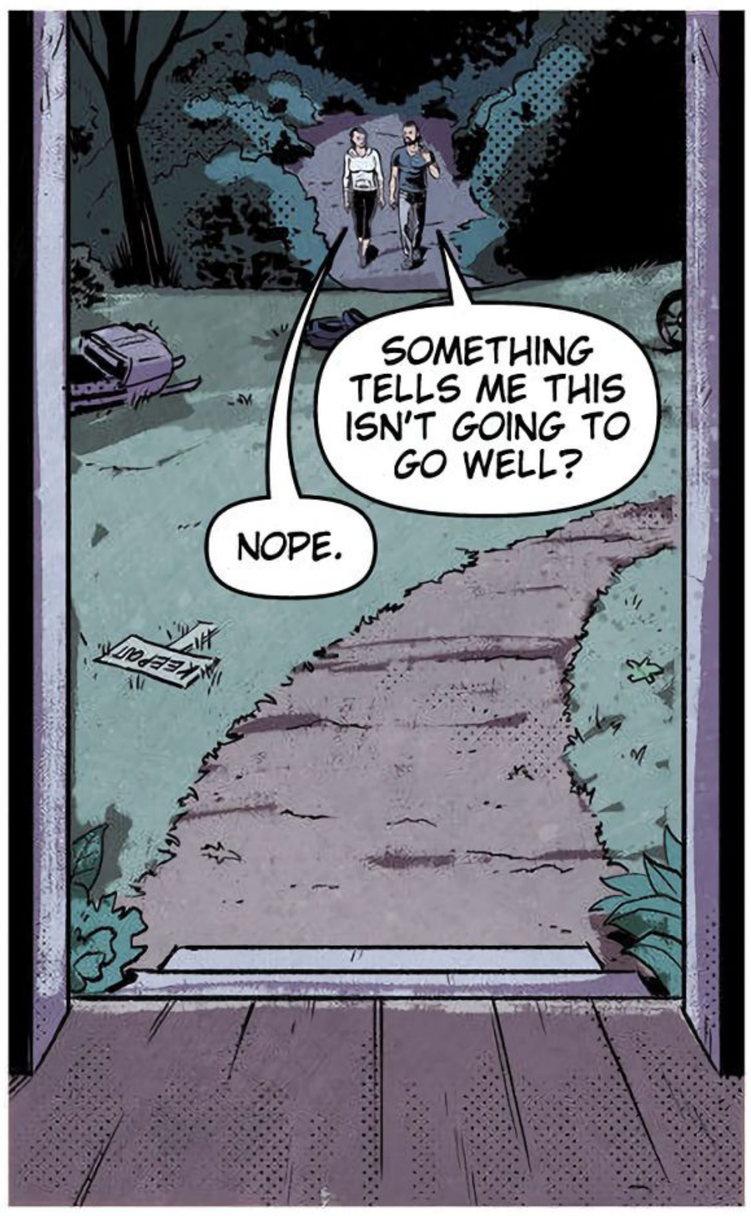
IT'S MORE...ELEMENTAL THAN THAT.
KAW KAW

BUT WHY HERE? AND WHY IN THIS DESIGN?
BECAUSE MONSTERS LIKE TO HIDE IN THE WOODS, I SUPPOSE.
YOU SAID A HUNTER REPORTED THIS?

CASEY SPENCER. LIVES OFF THE GRID.
KIND OF A WHACKO SURVIVALIST, BUT HARMLESS.

KAW KAW
I NEED TO TALK TO HIM.


NICE PLACE.
PRIVATE PROPERTY
TRESPASSERS WILL BE SHOT!


SOMETHING TELLS ME THIS ISN'T GOING TO GO WELL?
NOPE.

YOU THINK HE KNOWS WE'RE HERE?
WE PASSED AT LEAST THREE MOTION-SENSOR CAMERAS ON THE WAY IN.

NO VACUUM OR ENCYCLOPEDIA SALESMEN. NO MORMONS AND JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES.

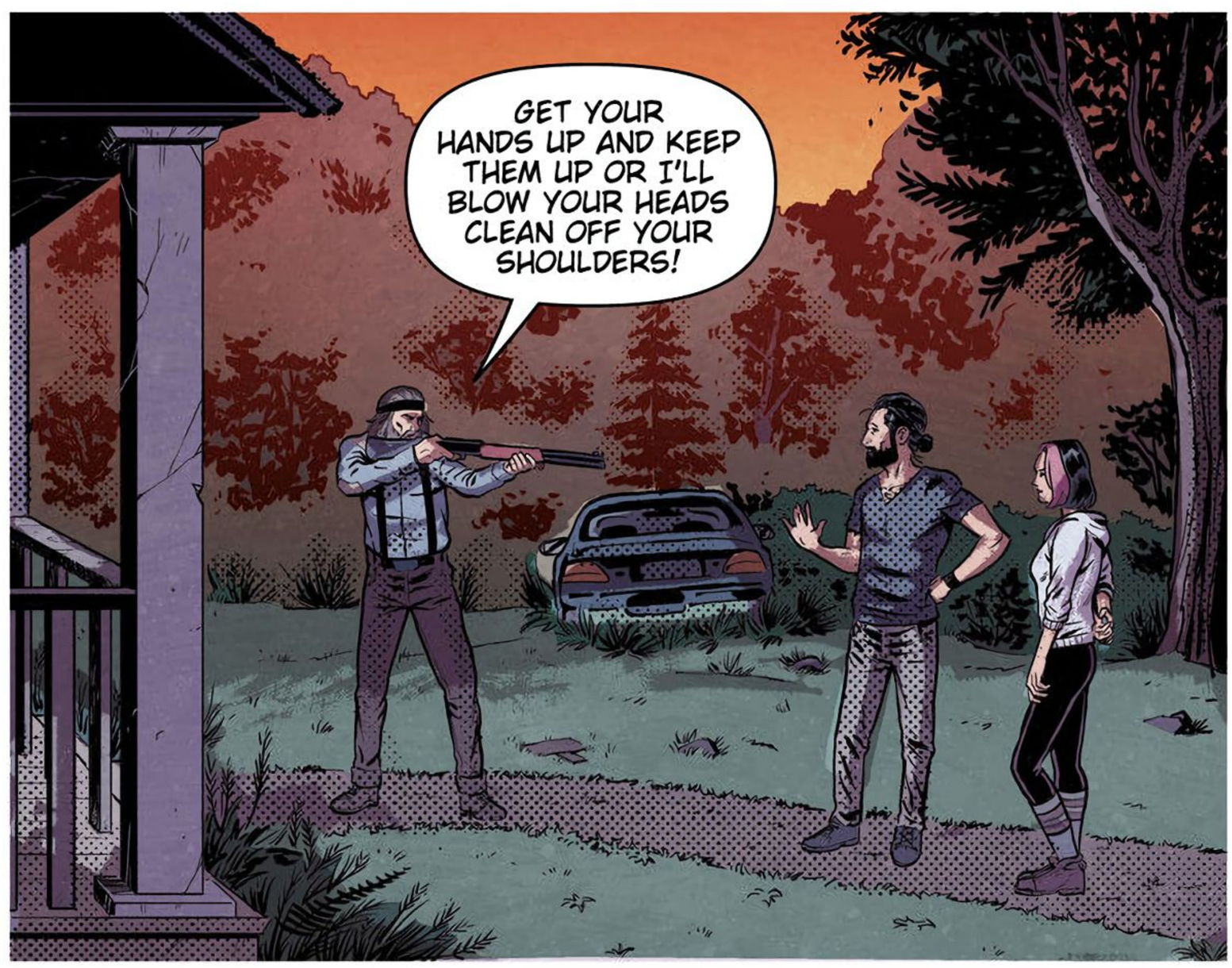
NO TRESPASSING MEANS NO NOBODY!
BOOM

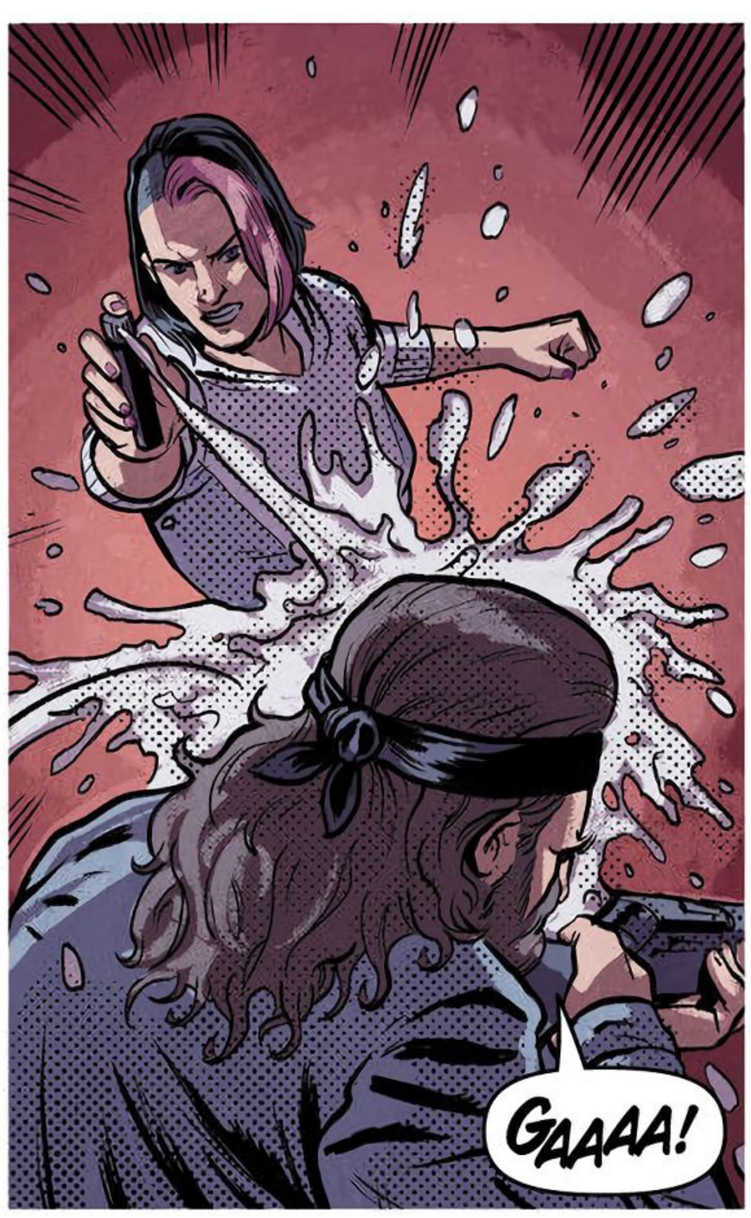
GET THE FUCK OFF MY PROPERTY OR I WILL EXERCISE MY RIGHT TO DEFEND IT!
CHA CHUNK

MR. SPENCER? WE'RE HERE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE BODIES YOU DISCOVERED.
I AIN'T GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT. EXCEPT FINDING THEM. YOU POLICE? YOU FEDS? WHAT ARE YOU?

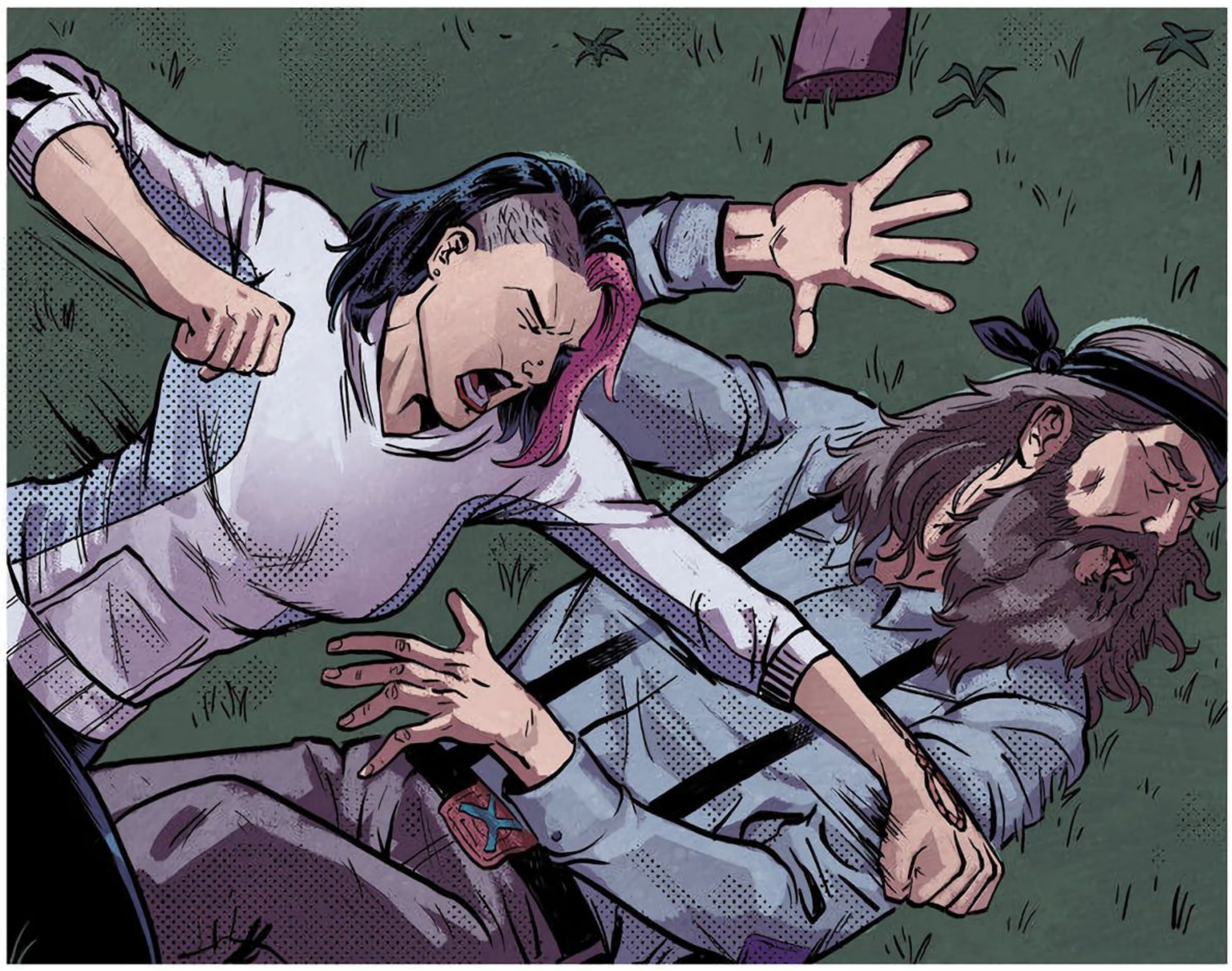
THAT WAS YOUR TRAIL CAM, WASN'T IT? STATIONED NEAR THE EDGE OF THE MEADOW? WE'D LIKE TO REVIEW THE RECORDING.

MAYBE YOU'RE THE ONES THAT DID IT. MAYBE YOU COME HERE TO KILL ME, TOO.
I ASSURE YOU, WE'RE--
GET YOUR HANDS UP!


GET YOUR HANDS UP AND KEEP THEM UP OR I'LL BLOW YOUR HEADS CLEAN OFF YOUR SHOULDERS!

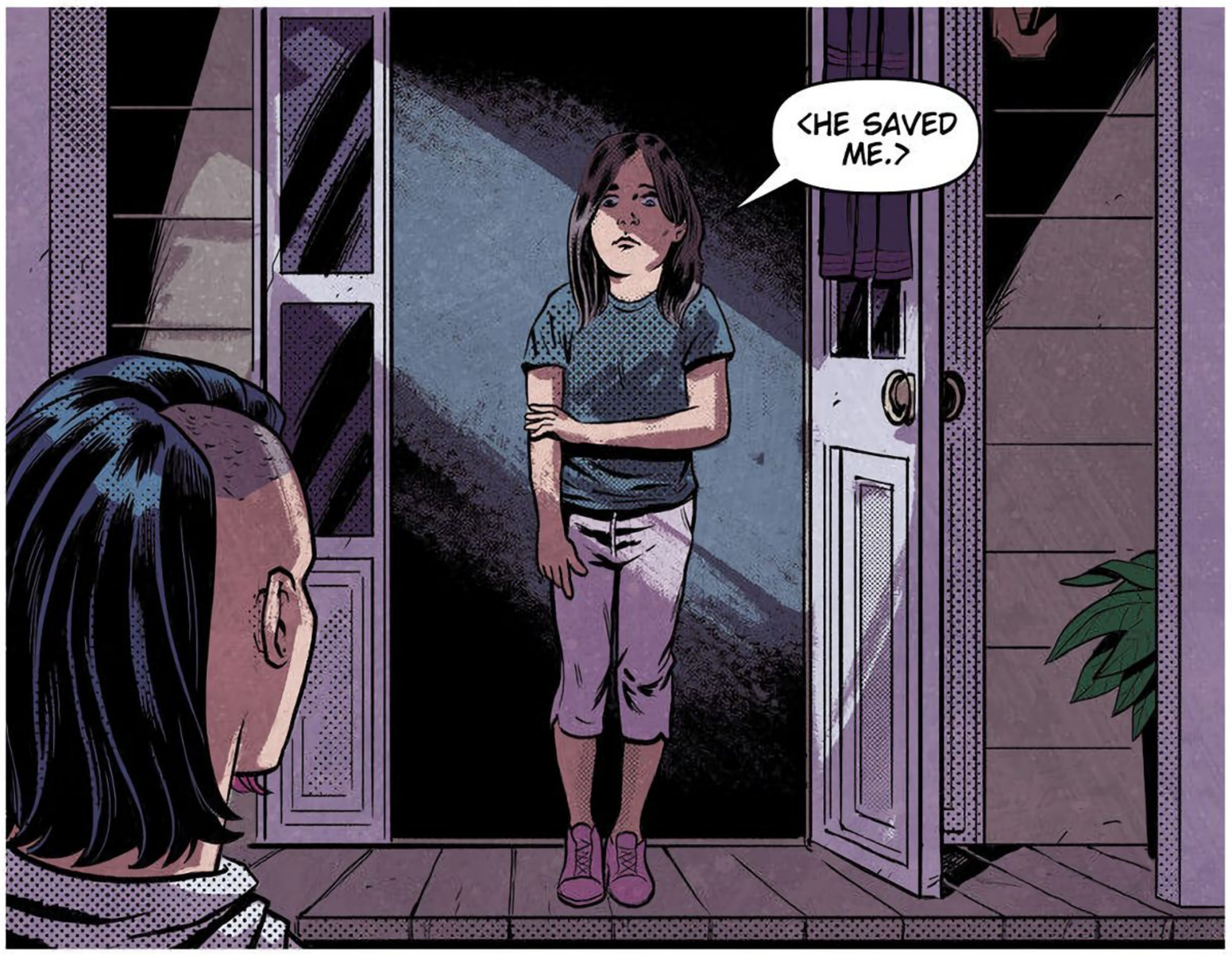

GAAAA!

BOOM

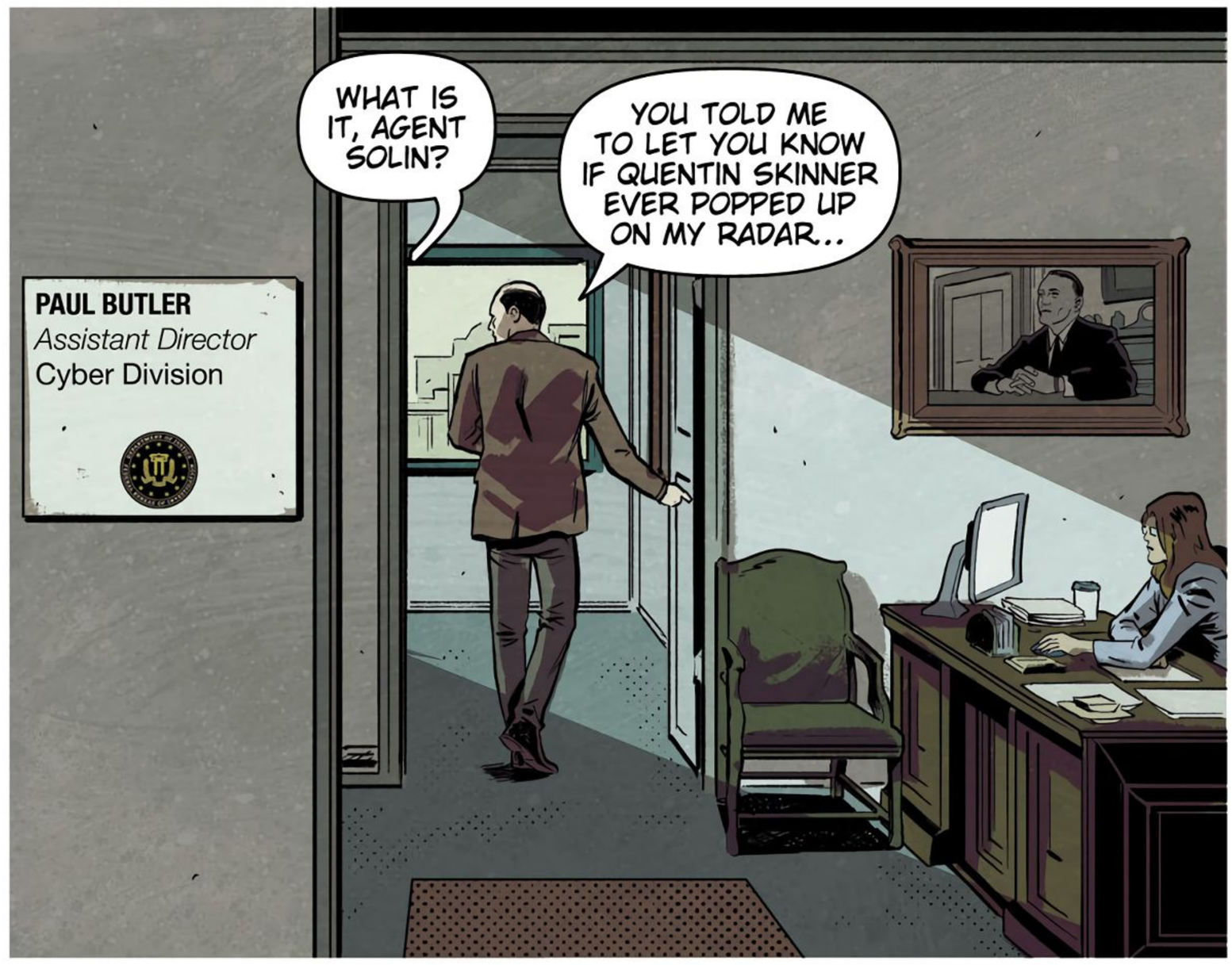


<PLEASE.>

<PLEASE DON'T HURT HIM.>

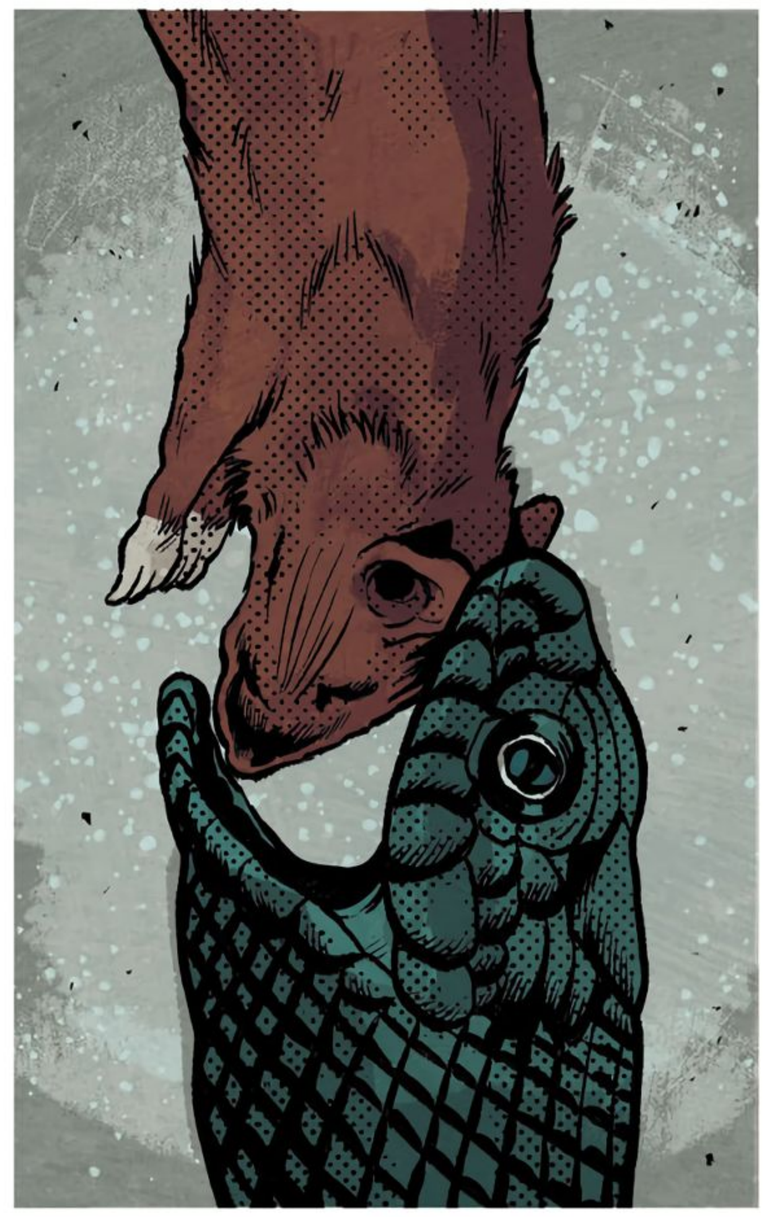

<HE SAVED ME.>

J. EDGAR HOOVER BUILDING.
WASHINGTON, DC.
EXCUSE ME, SIR?


PAUL BUTLER
Assistant Director
Cyber Division
WHAT IS IT, AGENT SOLIN?
YOU TOLD ME TO LET YOU KNOW IF QUENTIN SKINNER EVER POPPED UP ON MY RADAR..

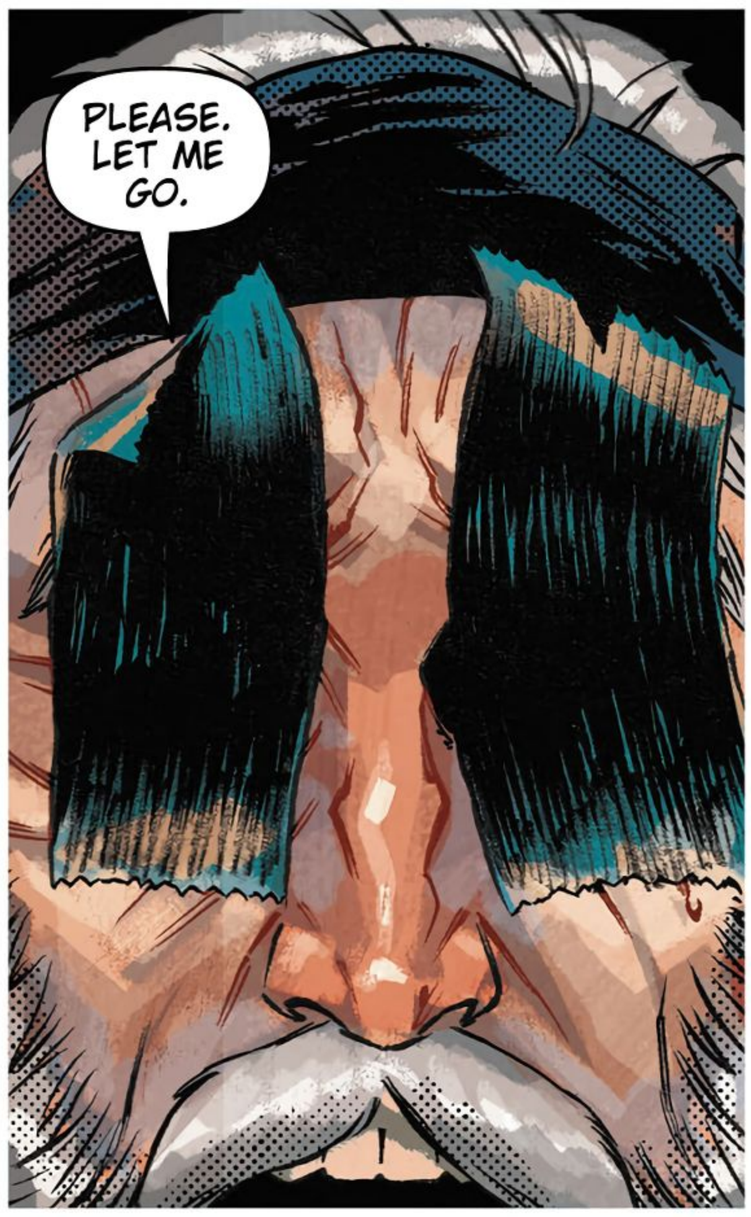
AND?
THE SHERIFF IN COOK COUNTY, MINNESOTA, REACHED OUT ABOUT A HOMICIDE INVESTIGATION. MIGHT INVOLVE HUMAN TRAFFICKING.
SOUNDS LIKE SKINNER IS CAUGHT UP IN IT. IMPERSONATING AS AN AGENT AGAIN.

THANK YOU. I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.
IF YOU COULD CLOSE THE DOOR ON YOUR WAY OUT?



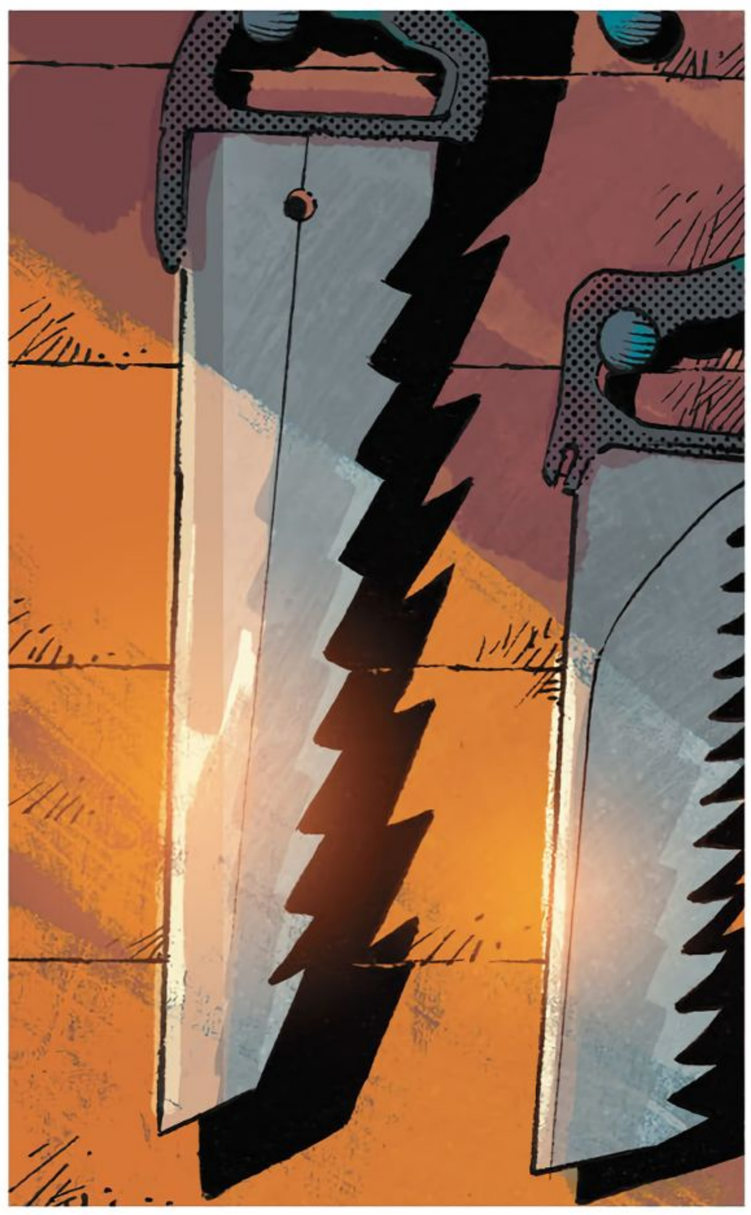
BEFORE WE MOVE FORWARD ANY FURTHER WITH OUR PLANS...
...WE NEED TO TAKE CARE OF A LITTLE PROBLEM.

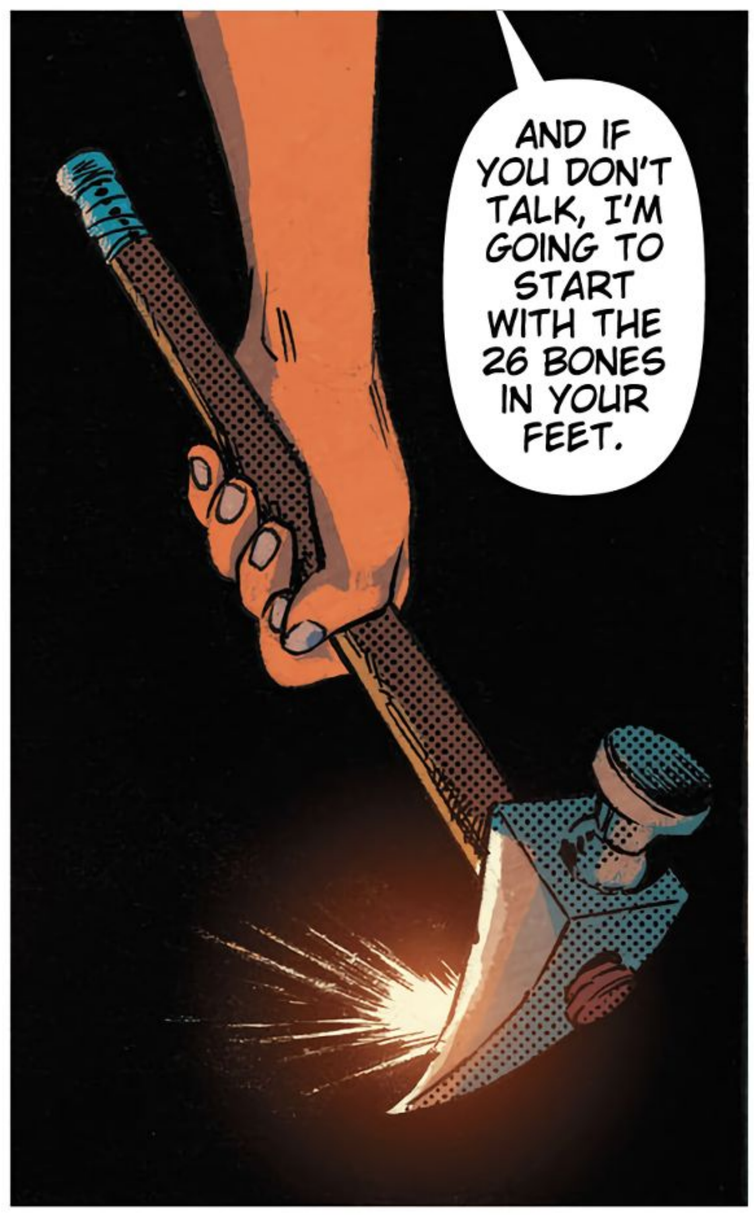
BRENT


PLEASE. LET ME GO.

I'LL LET YOU GO.

BUT FIRST YOU NEED TO TALK.




AND IF YOU DON'T TALK, I'M GOING TO START WITH THE 26 BONES IN YOUR FEET.

THEN I'LL MOVE ON TO THE TIBIA AND FIBULA.

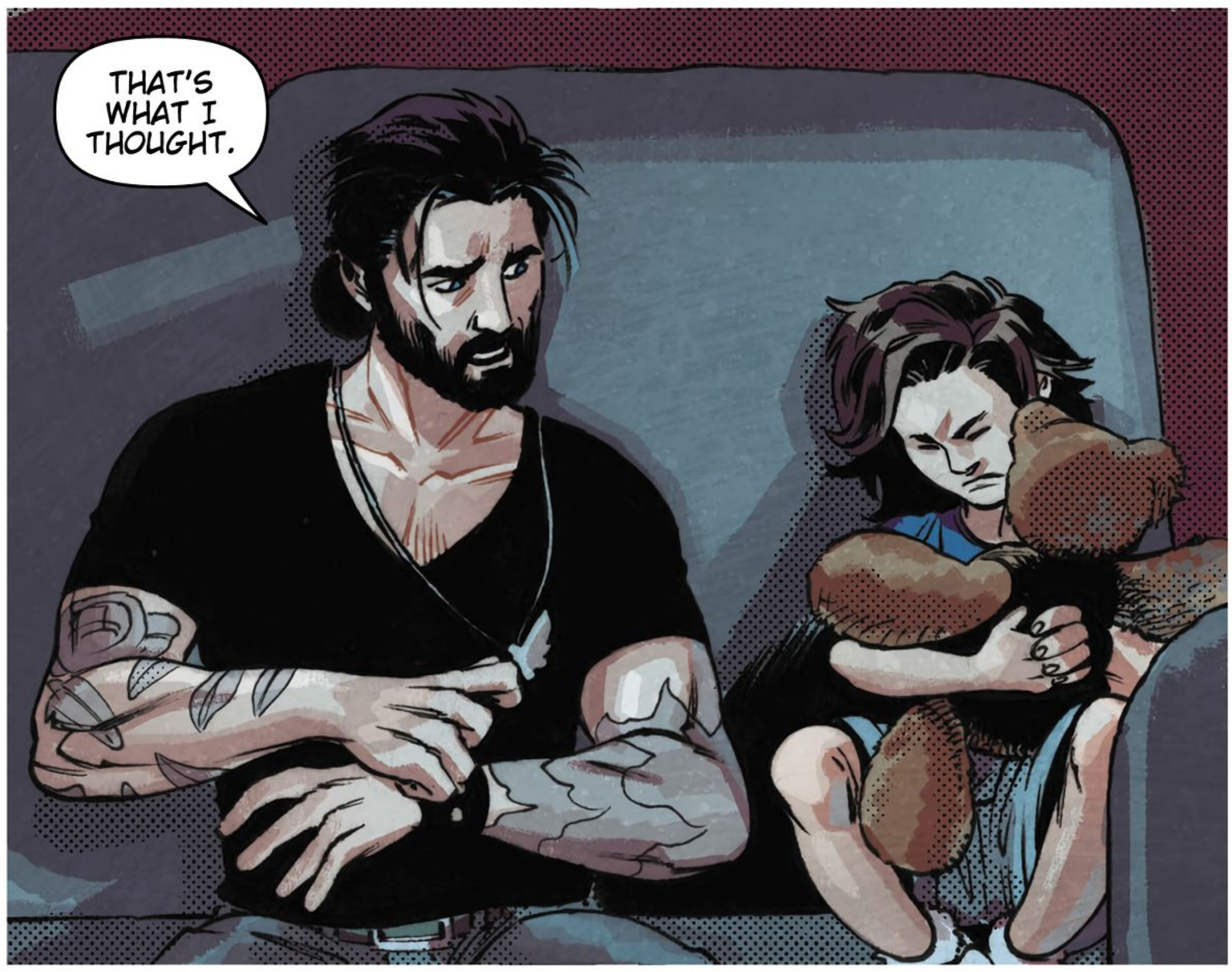
THEN THE KNEES.

THEN THE FEMUR.
AND FROM THERE, WE'LL KEEP WORKING OUR WAY UP...

JOIN, or DIE.
DONT TREAD ON M
UNTIL YOU TELL ME WHAT THE FUCK HAPPENED IN THAT MEADOW FULL OF BODIES...
CANS
ICE
WATER

"...AND WHY THE FUCK YOU'VE GOT THAT LITTLE RUSSIAN GIRL UPSTAIRS."

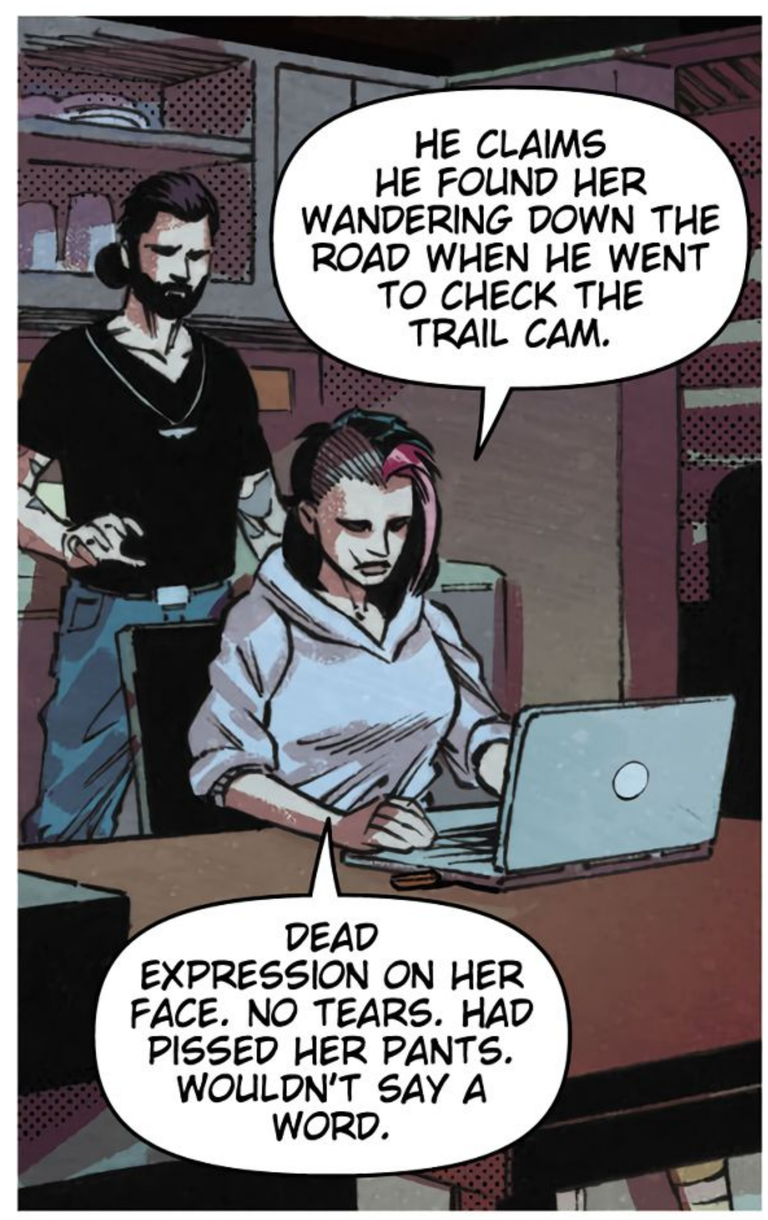
THIS IS YOURS, ISN'T IT?


THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.

DO YOU KNOW ANY ENGLISH?
HELLO, GOODBYE, BATHROOM, TV, CANDY, MCDONALD'S?

MCDONALD'S?

WELL?



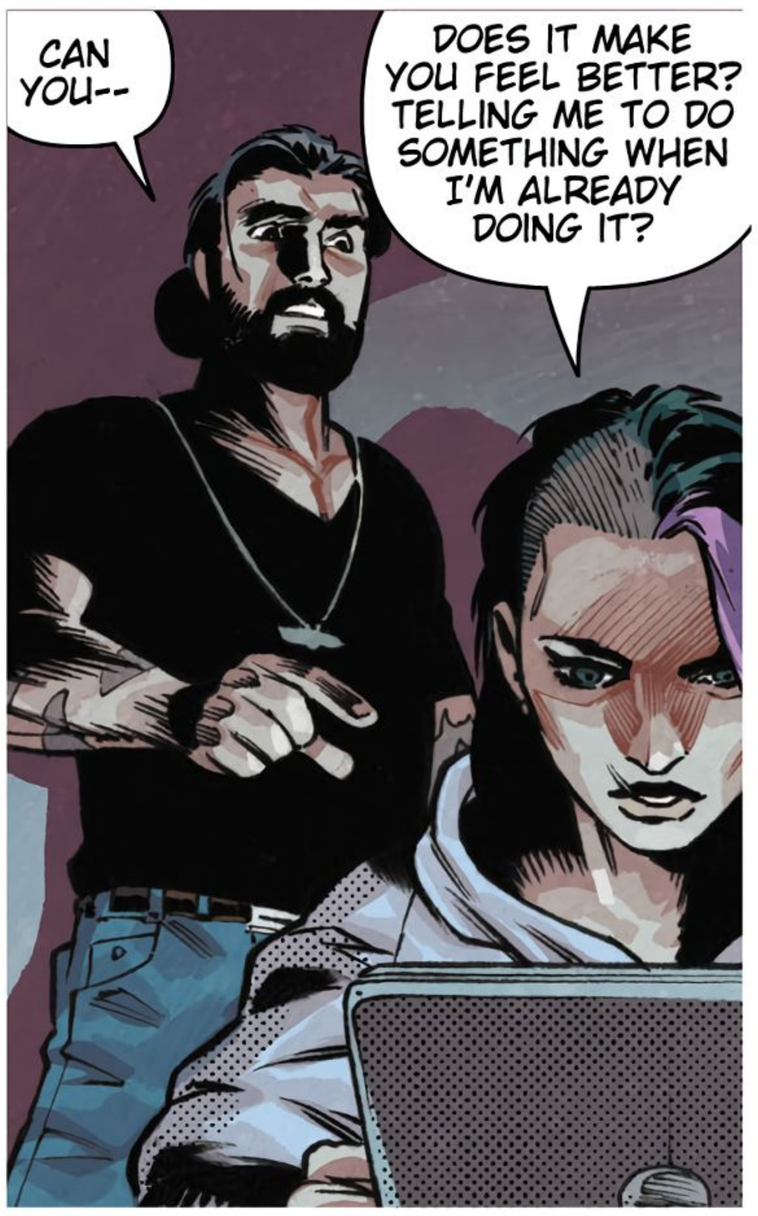
THEN WHY DIDN'T HE TELL THE COPS THAT? WHY DIDN'T HE HAND HER OVER?

CHECK THIS OUT.

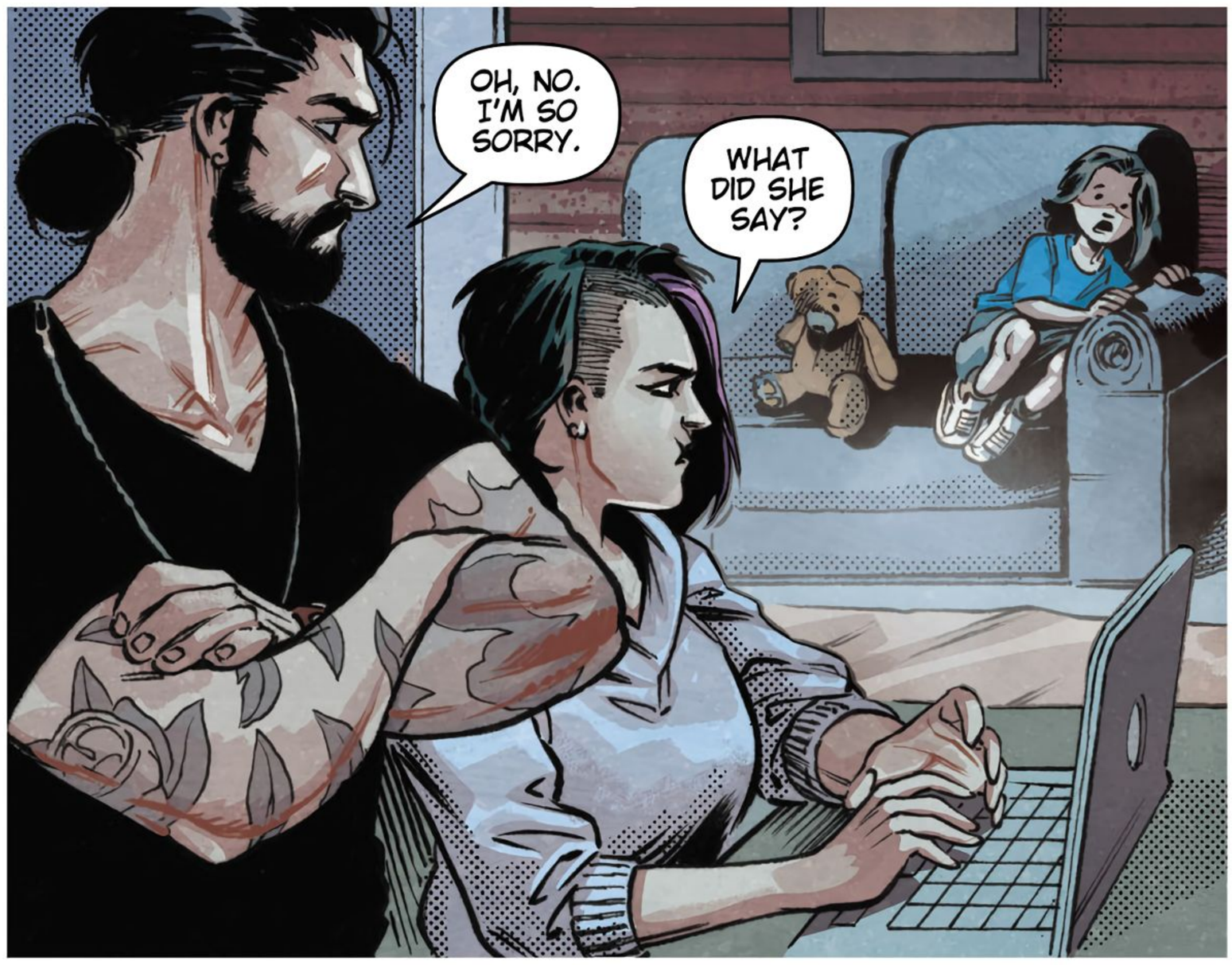
REC
THESE TRAIL CAMS ARE MOTION-ACTIVATED. THEIR DETECTION RANGE IS BETWEEN 50 AND A 100 FEET.

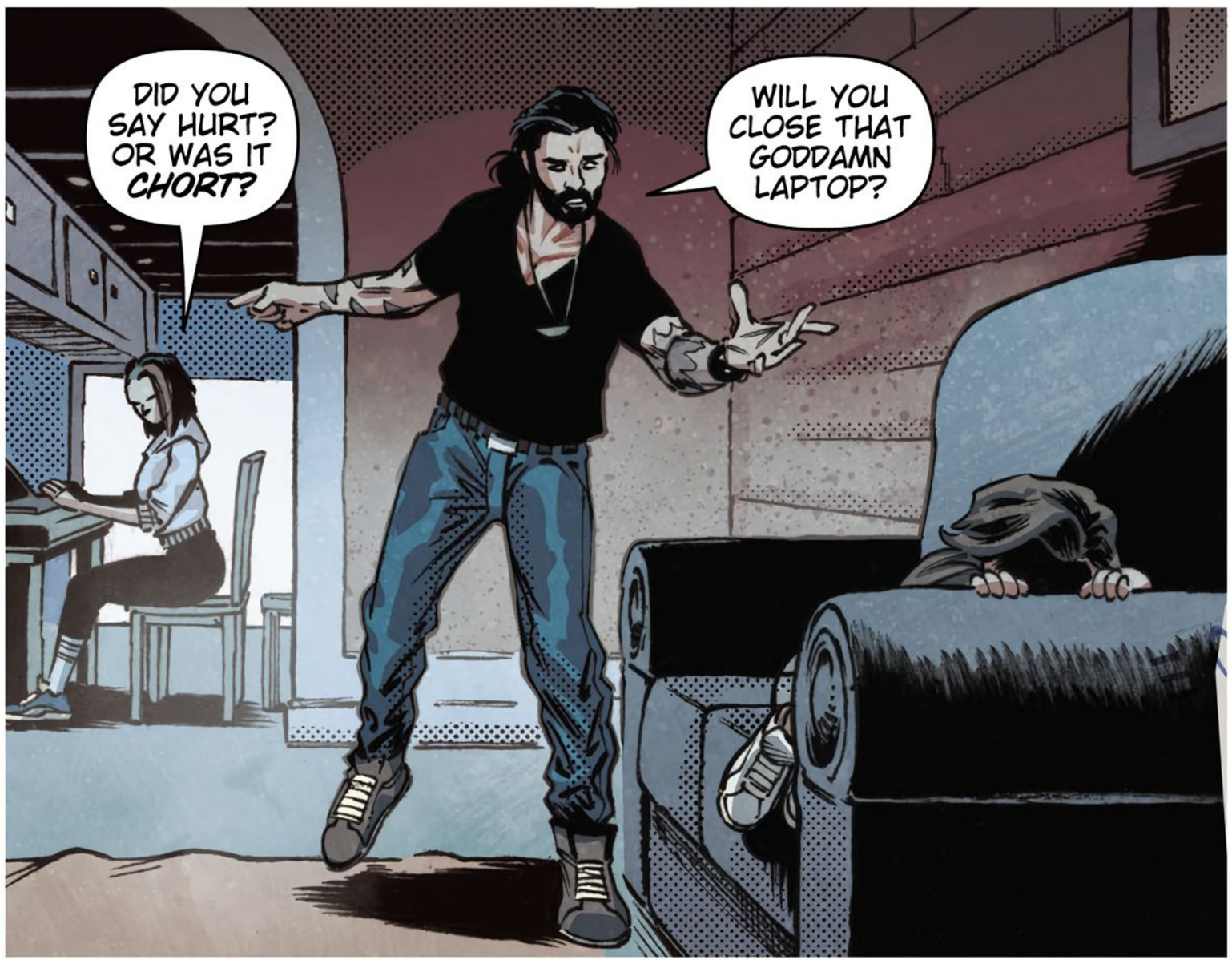
REC
SO WE CAN'T SEE EVERYTHING, BUT...

REC
WE CAN SEE ENOUGH.


CAN YOU--
DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER? TELLING ME TO DO SOMETHING WHEN I'M ALREADY DOING IT?

CHORT.


OH, NO. I'M SO SORRY.
WHAT DID SHE SAY?


DID YOU SAY HURT? OR WAS IT CHORT?
WILL YOU CLOSE THAT GODDAMN LAPTOP?

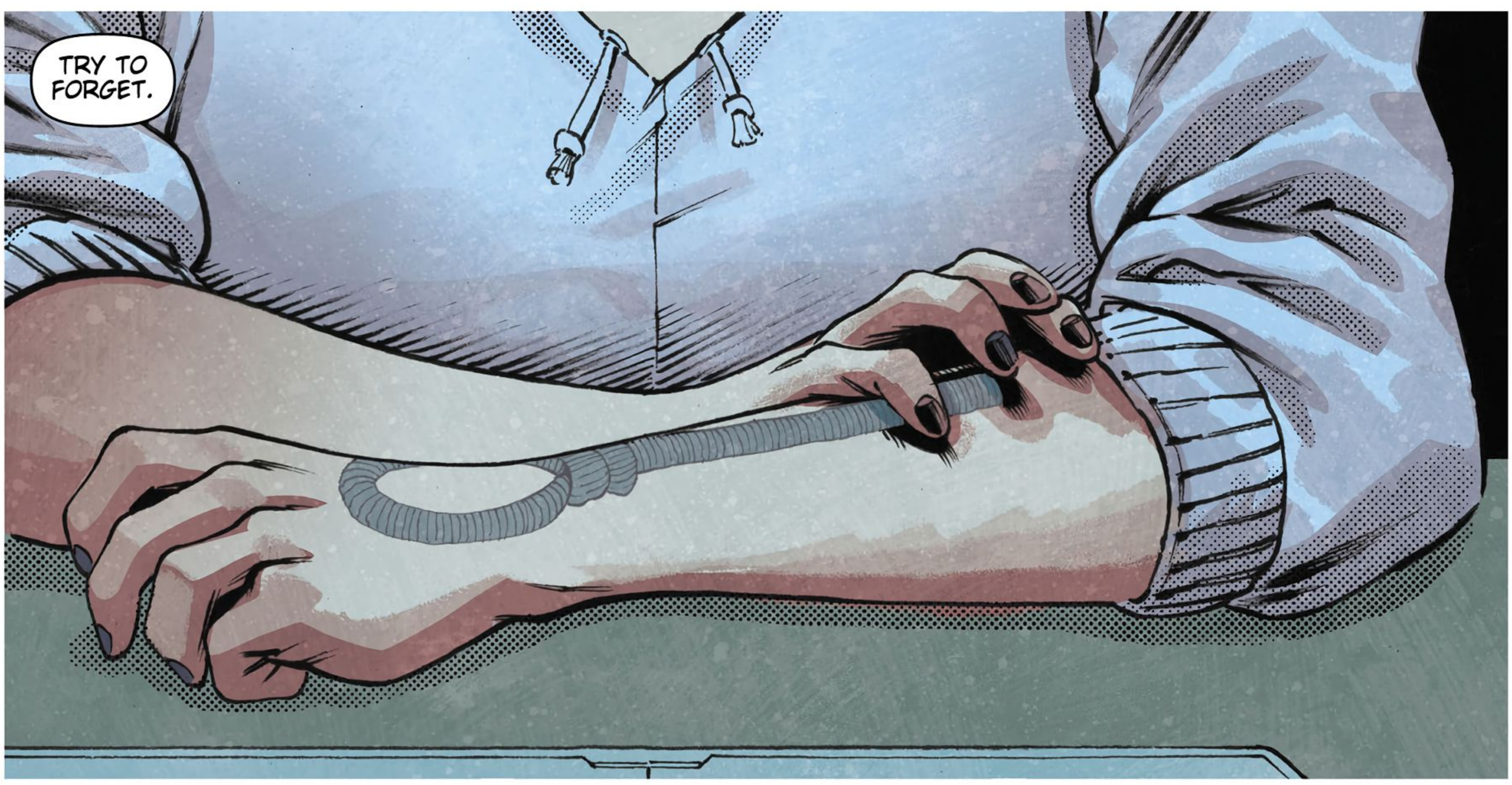
SHARON. NOW.
Translate
Russian detected
CHORT
English
DEVIL

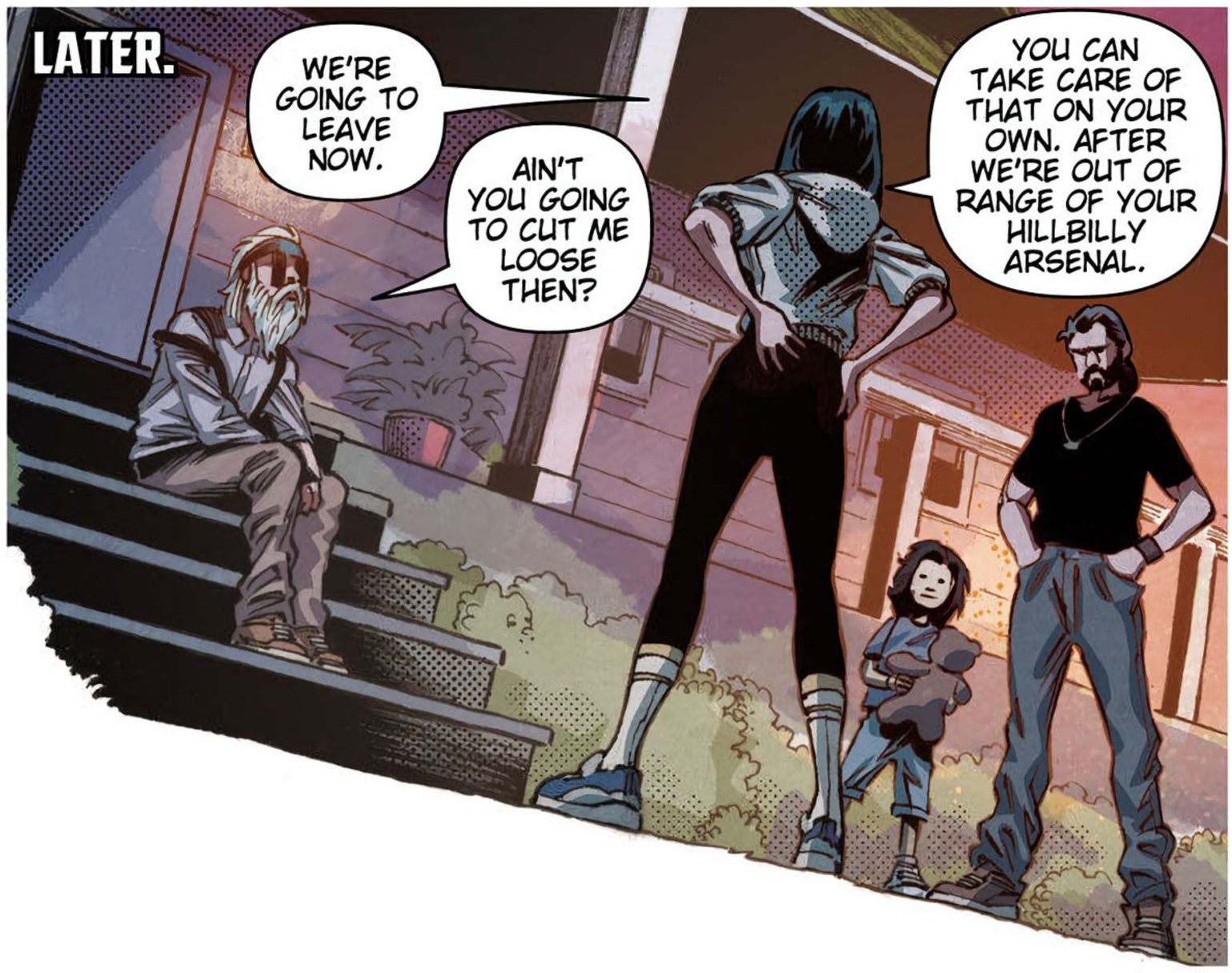
HEY, HEY. IT'S OKAY. SHH. SHHH.
WE'RE SO SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU.

AND WE'RE SO SORRY YOU SAW THAT.
BUT YOU'RE SAFE NOW.

WE WON'T LET ANYTHING BAD HAPPEN.

TRY TO FORGET WHAT YOU SAW.

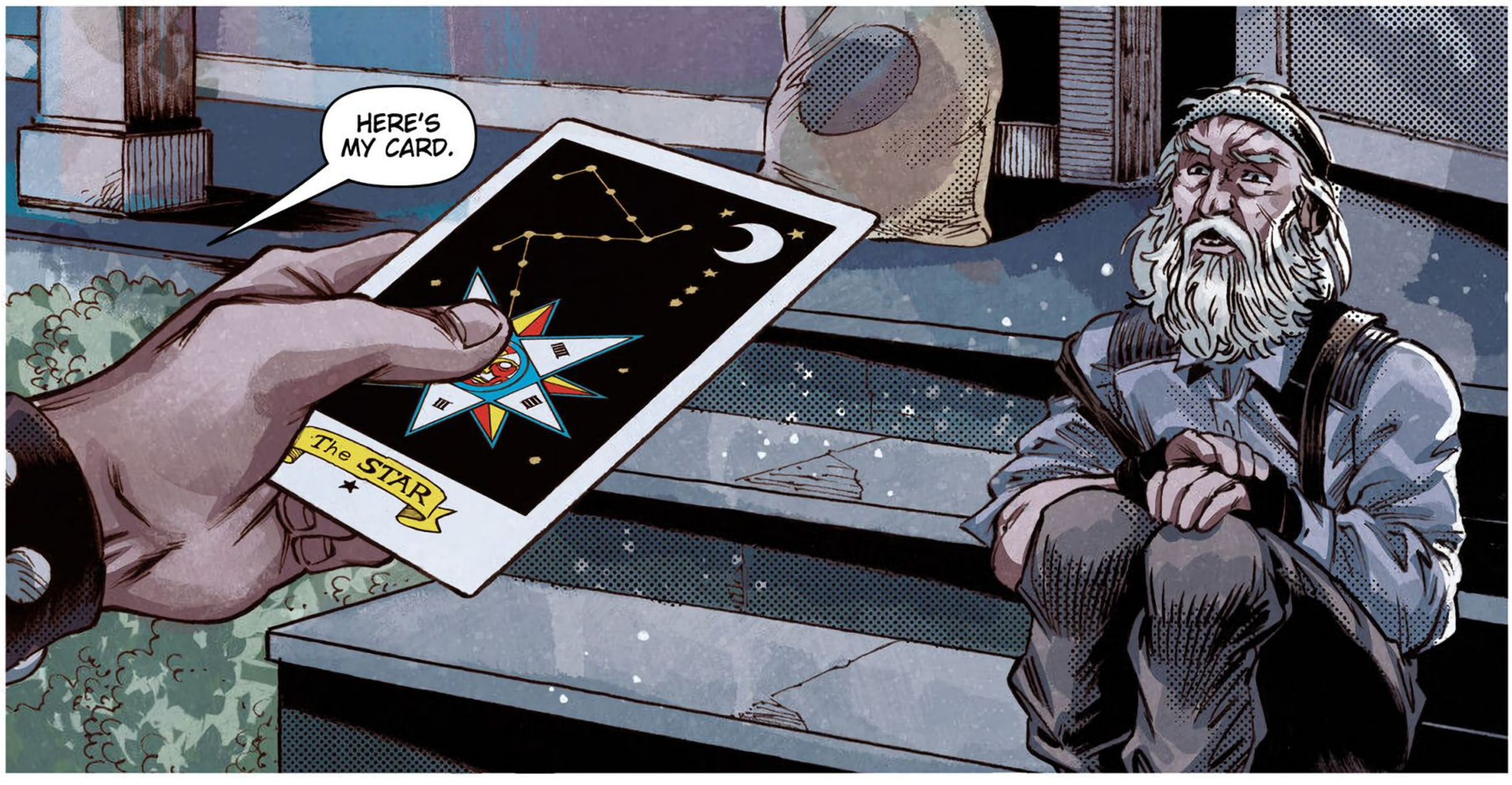

TRY TO FORGET.

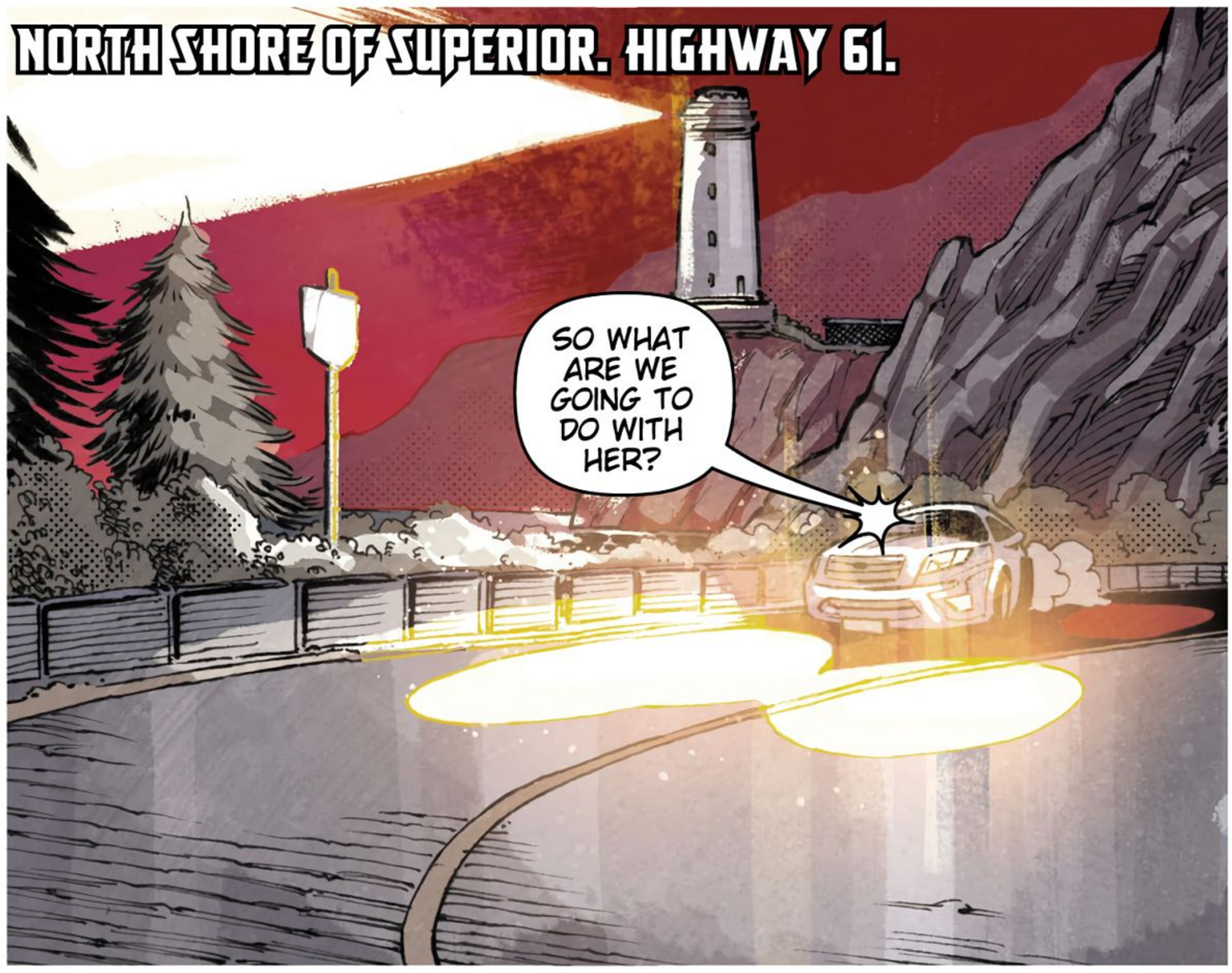

LATER.
WE'RE GOING TO LEAVE NOW.
AIN'T YOU GOING TO CUT ME LOOSE THEN?
YOU CAN TAKE CARE OF THAT ON YOUR OWN. AFTER WE'RE OUT OF RANGE OF YOUR HILLBILLY ARSENAL.

YOU'VE BEEN HELPFUL. NOW YOU'RE GOING TO CONTINUE TO BE HELPFUL.
KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN.

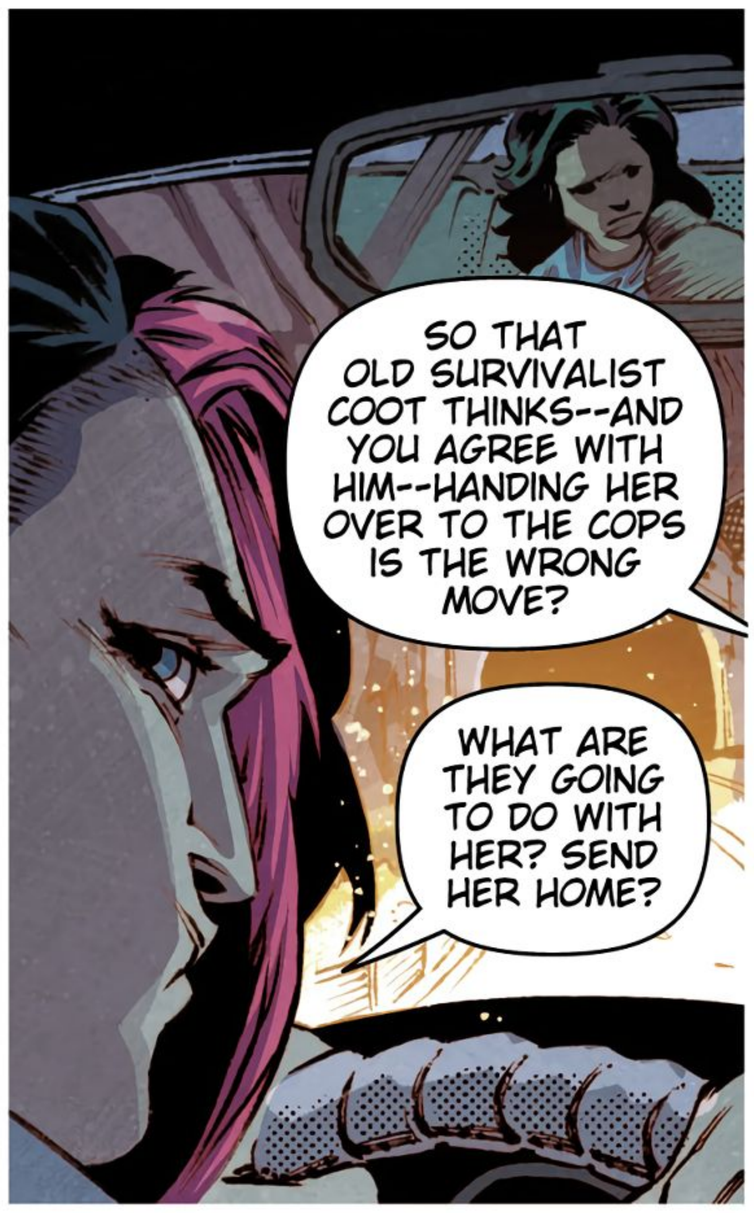
SET UP MORE TRAIL CAMS. AND HUNT THAT ROAD.
ANY UNUSUAL ACTIVITY OR TRAFFIC, YOU REPORT IT TO ME.

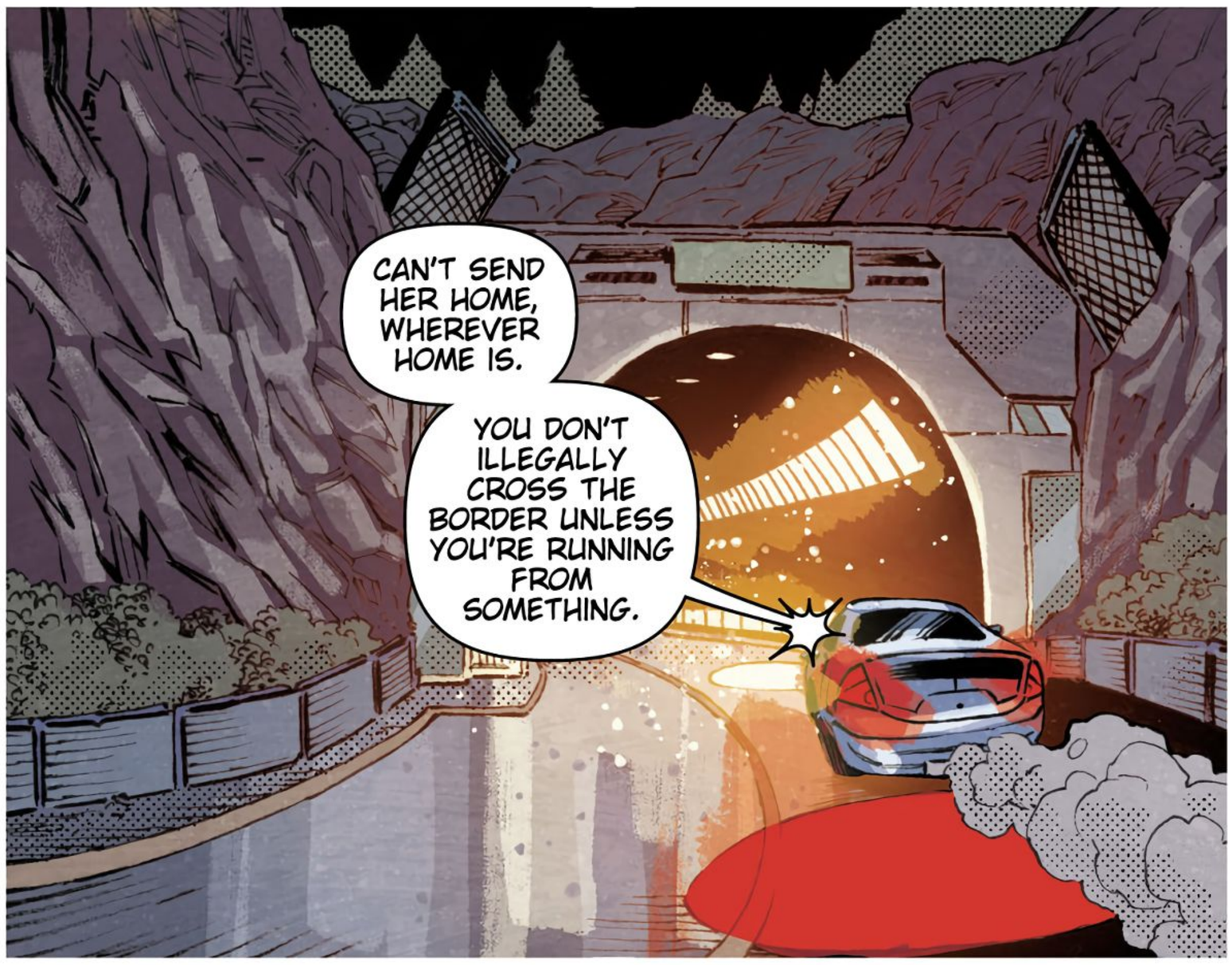
OH, I ALMOST FORGOT.

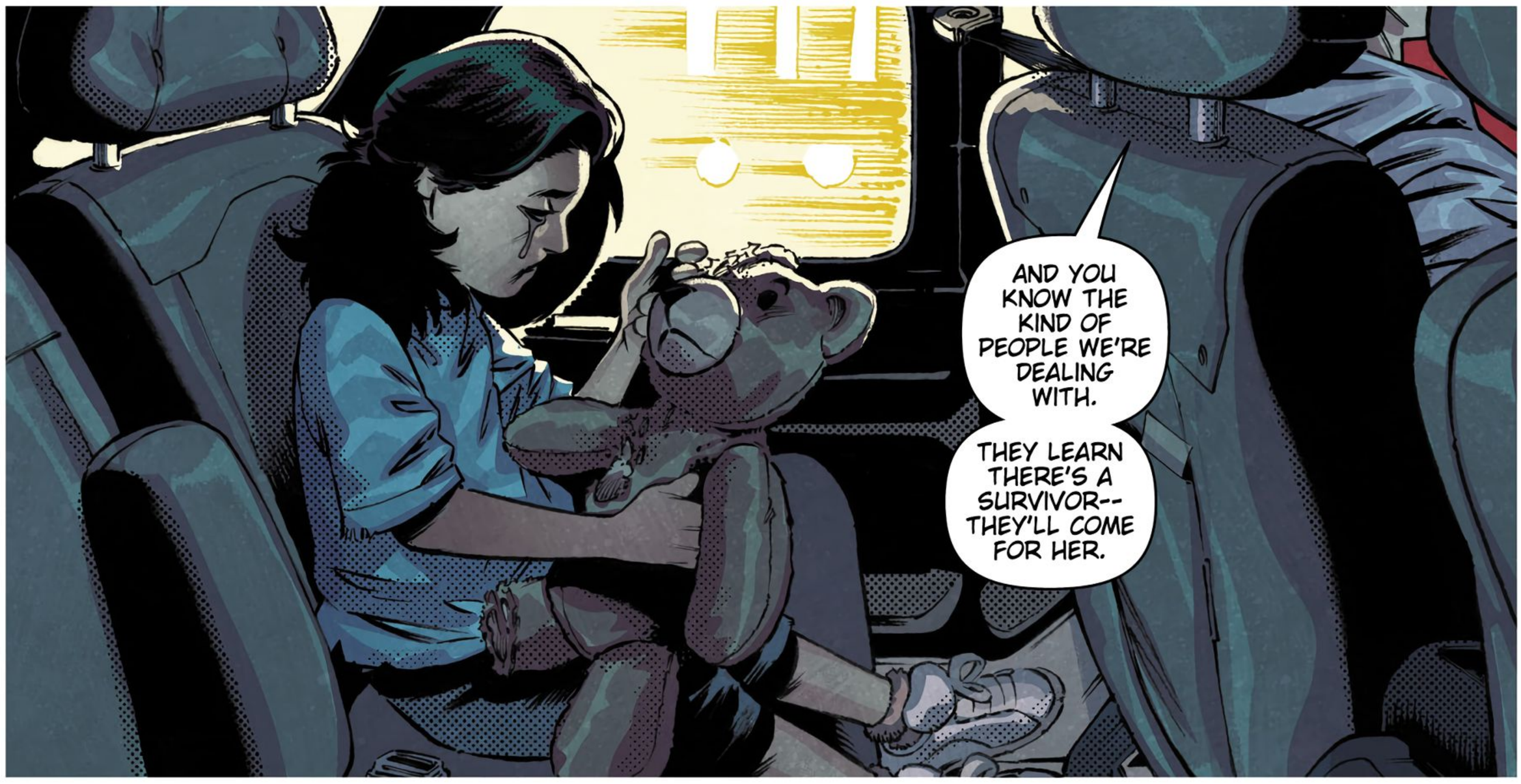

HERE'S MY CARD.
The STAR

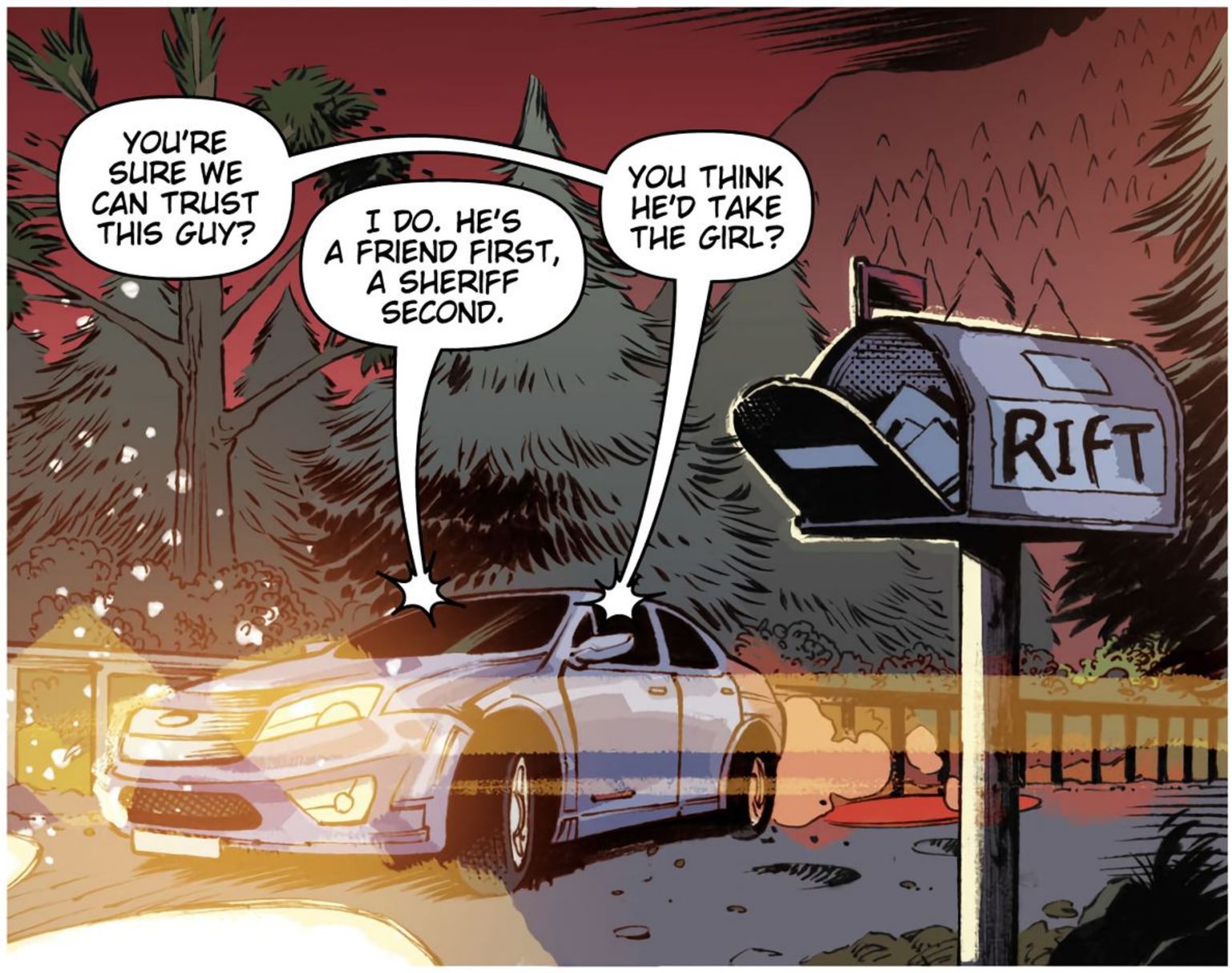

NORTH SHORE OF SUPERIOR. HIGHWAY 61.
SO WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH HER?

I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.
WE KIND OF HAVE TO TALK ABOUT IT.
CASEY SPENCER DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL TO DO WITH HER. I DON'T EITHER.

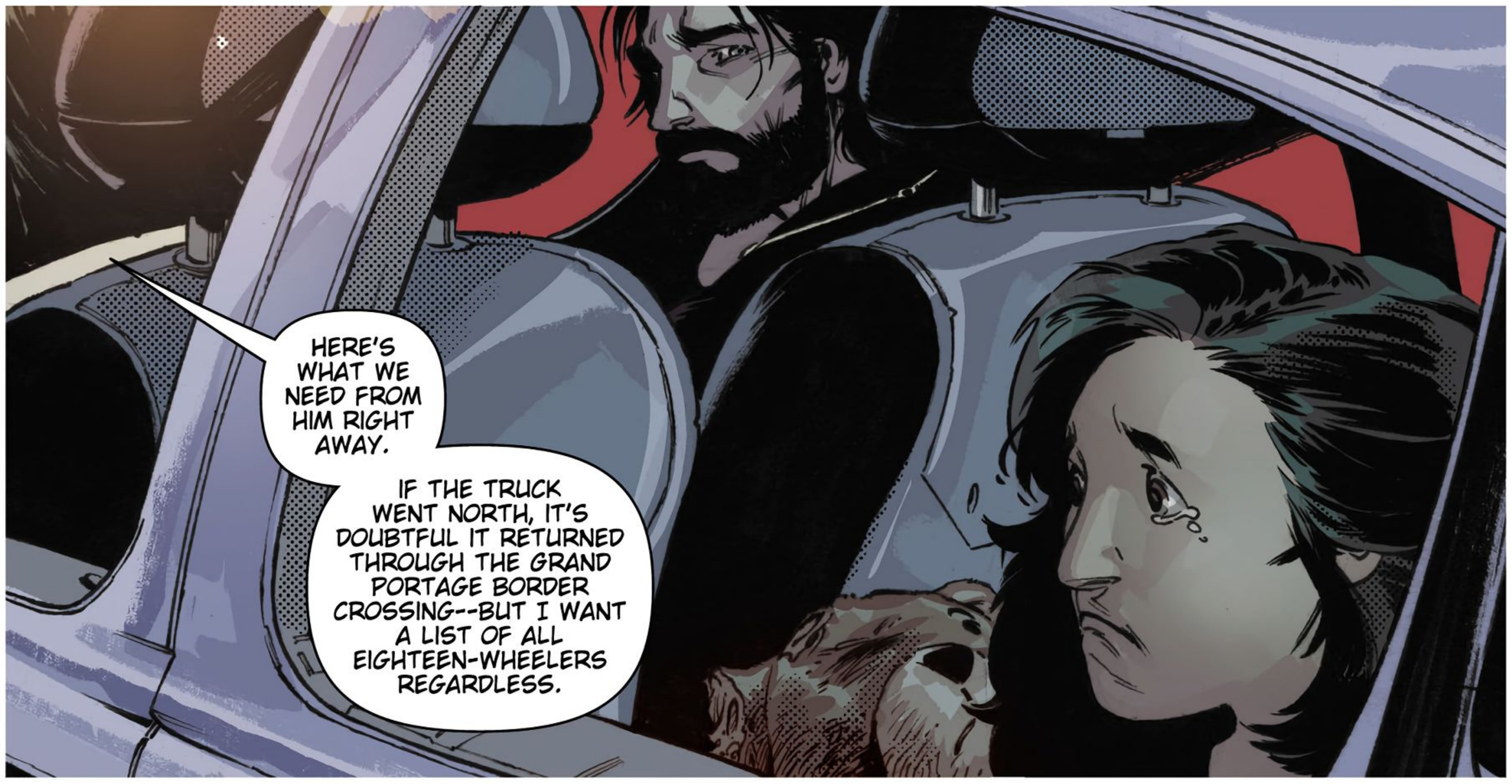

SO THAT OLD SURVIVALIST COOT THINKS--AND YOU AGREE WITH HIM--HANDING HER OVER TO THE COPS IS THE WRONG MOVE?
WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO WITH HER? SEND HER HOME?

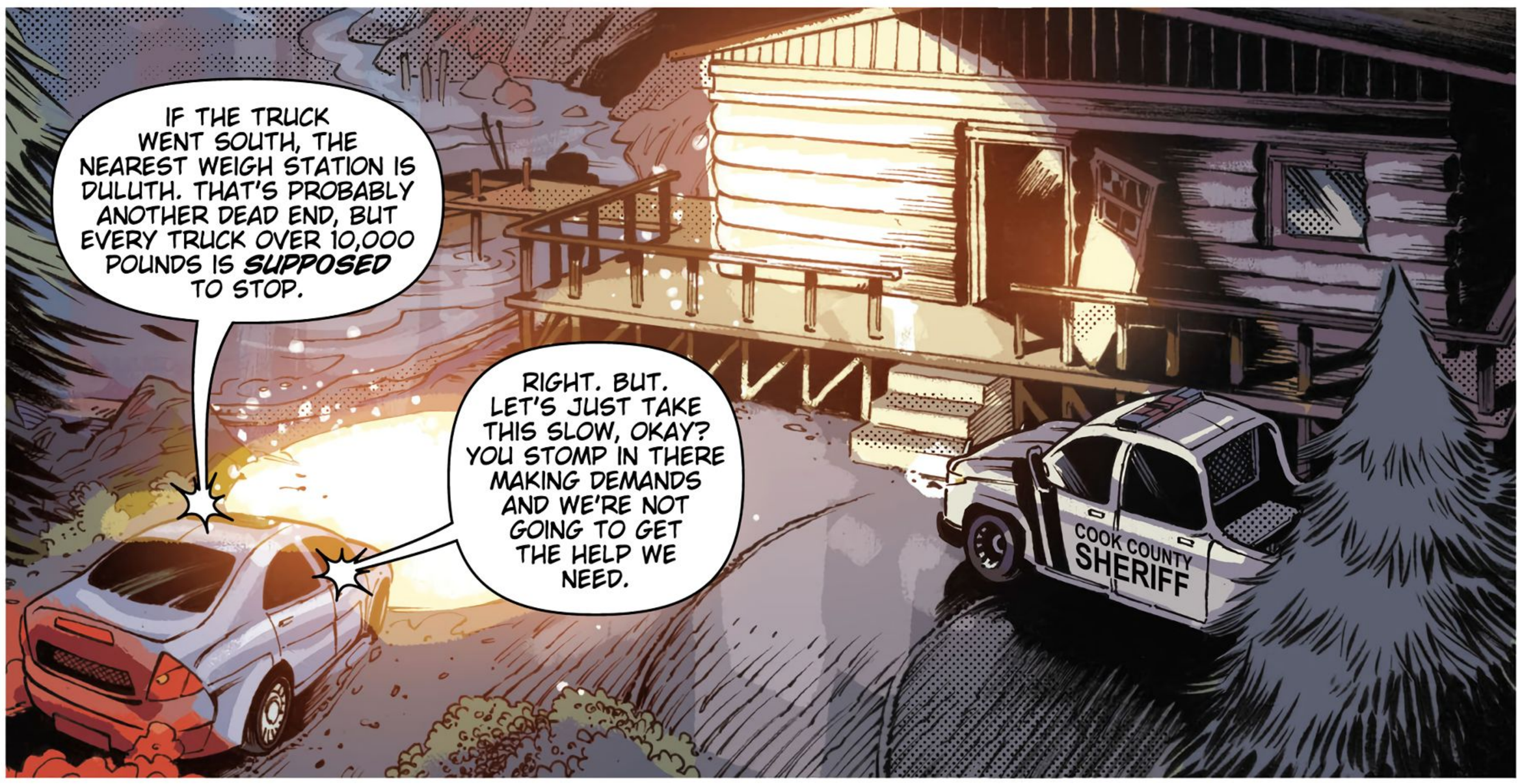

CAN'T SEND HER HOME, WHEREVER HOME IS.
YOU DON'T ILLEGALLY CROSS THE BORDER UNLESS YOU'RE RUNNING FROM SOMETHING.


AND YOU KNOW THE KIND OF PEOPLE WE'RE DEALING WITH.
THEY LEARN THERE'S A SURVIVOR--THEY'LL COME FOR HER.


YOU'RE SURE WE CAN TRUST THIS GUY?
I DO. HE'S A FRIEND FIRST, A SHERIFF SECOND.
YOU THINK HE'D TAKE THE GIRL?
RIFT

DON'T KNOW. BUT ANYTHING WE SAY TO HIM, WE SAY IN CONFIDENCE.
THAT'S WHY HE TOLD US TO MEET HIM AT HIS CABIN, NOT THE STATION. SOUNDS LIKE HIS WIFE MIGHT TREAT US TO SUPPER EVEN.


HERE'S WHAT WE NEED FROM HIM RIGHT AWAY.
IF THE TRUCK WENT NORTH, IT'S DOUBTFUL IT RETURNED THROUGH THE GRAND PORTAGE BORDER CROSSING--BUT I WANT A LIST OF ALL EIGHTEEN-WHEELERS REGARDLESS.


IF THE TRUCK WENT SOUTH, THE NEAREST WEIGH STATION IS DULUTH. THAT'S PROBABLY ANOTHER DEAD END, BUT EVERY TRUCK OVER 10,000 POUNDS IS SUPPOSED TO STOP.
RIGHT. BUT. LET'S JUST TAKE THIS SLOW, OKAY? YOU STOMP IN THERE MAKING DEMANDS AND WE'RE NOT GOING TO GET THE HELP WE NEED.
COOK COUNTY SHERIFF

CLICK

CLICK

CLICK

CLICK

CLICK

CLICK

CLICK

CLICK

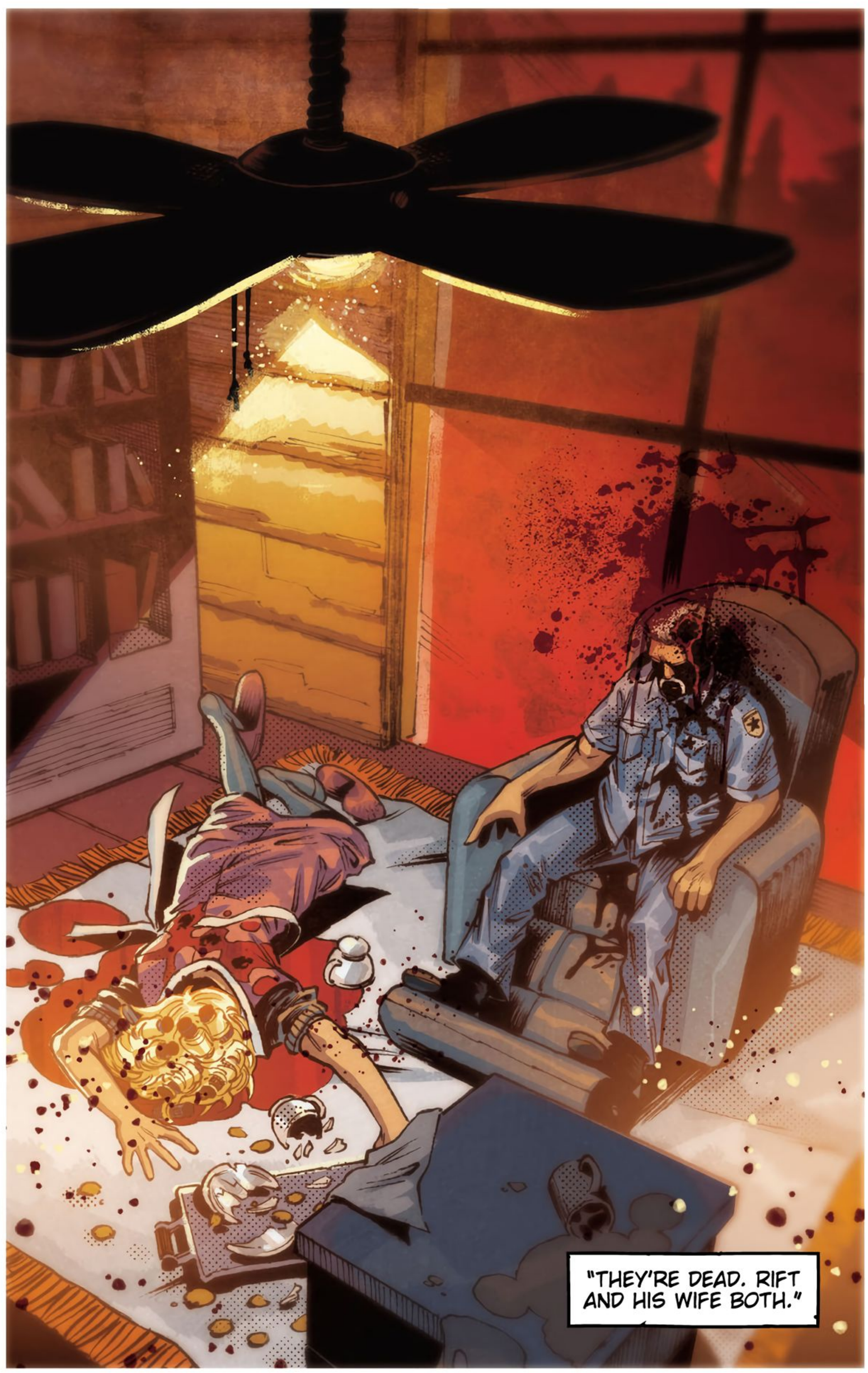
CLICK

GO!

WHAT'S WRONG?
GO, GO, GO!

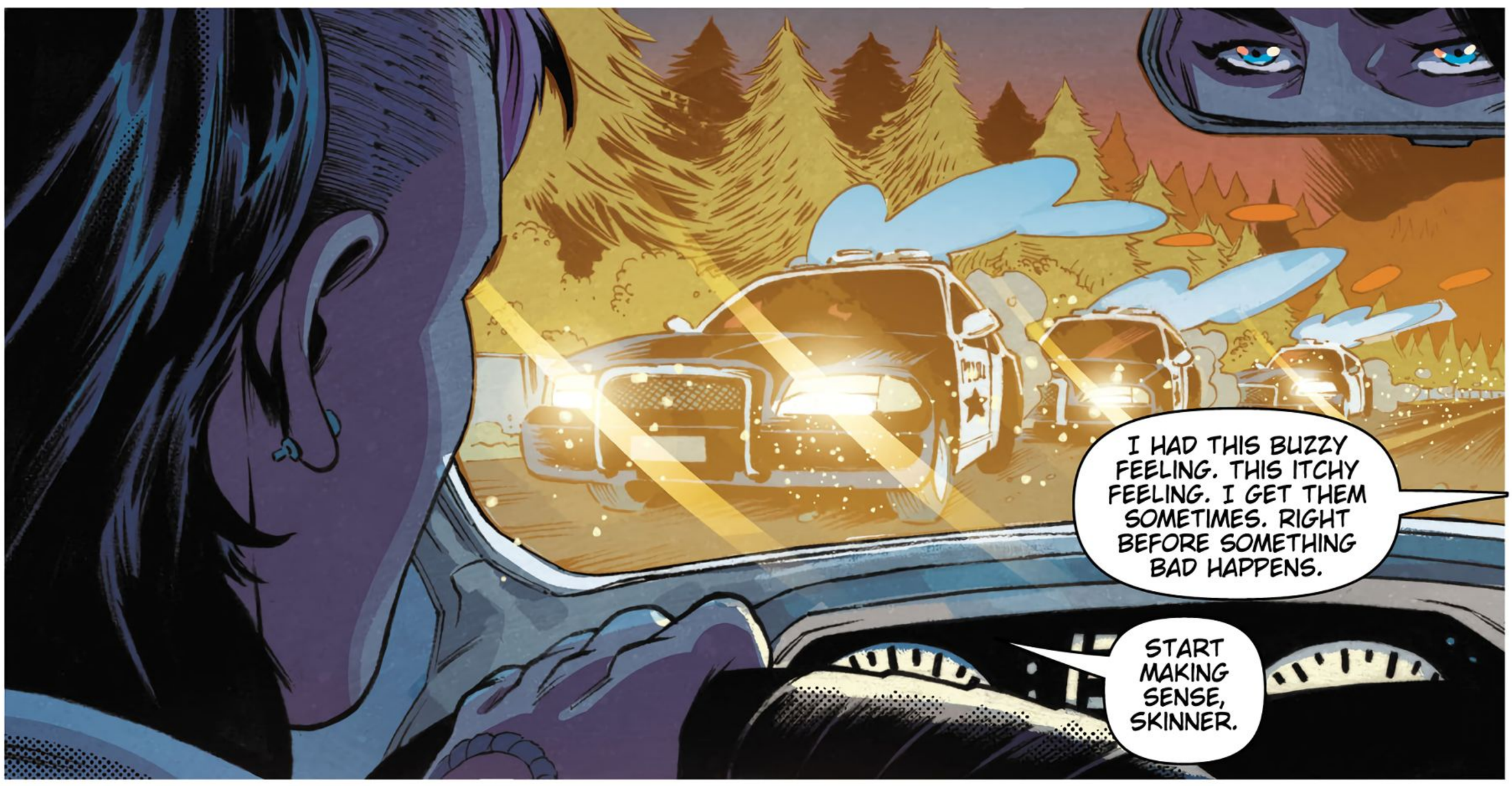
TELL ME WHAT'S HAPPENING.

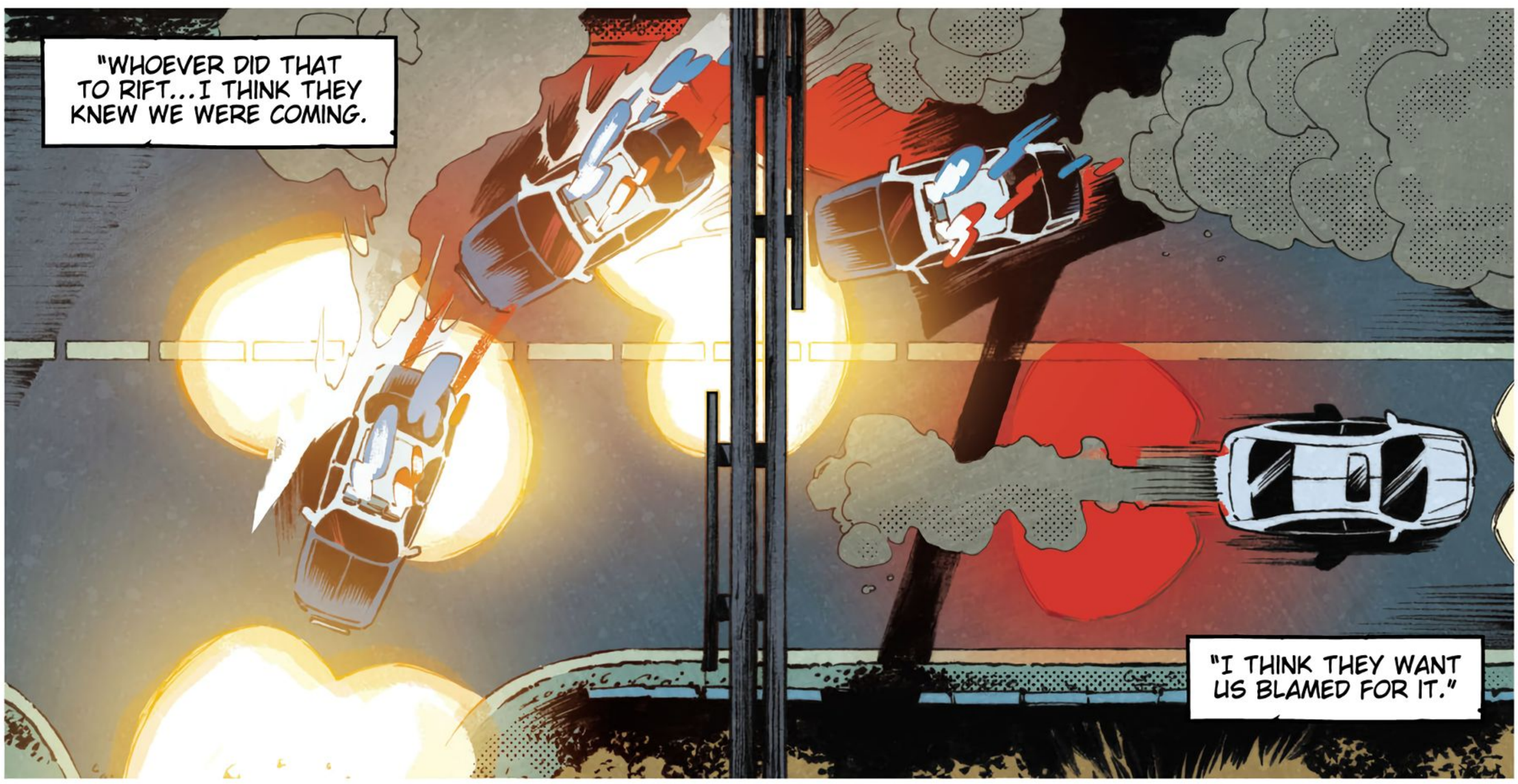
JUST HURRY. TRUST ME.


"THEY'RE DEAD. RIFT AND HIS WIFE BOTH."

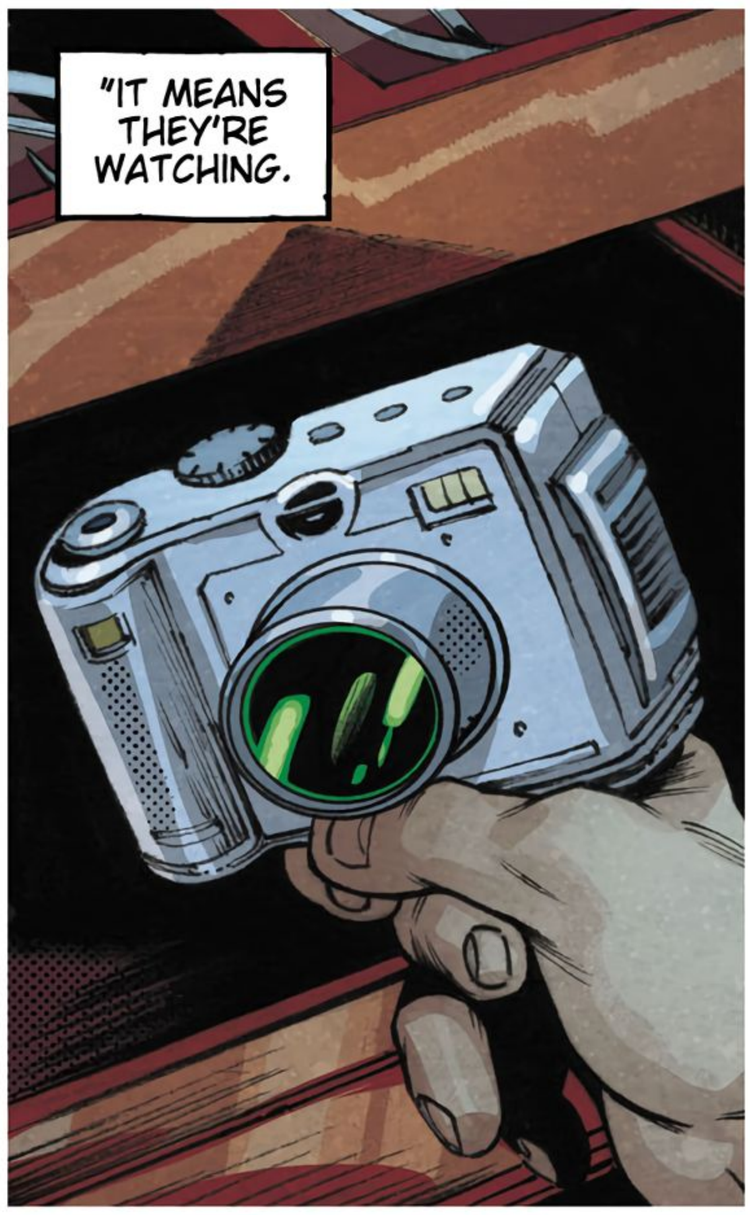
THEN WHY THE HELL ARE WE RUNNING AWAY?
WE SHOULD BE--

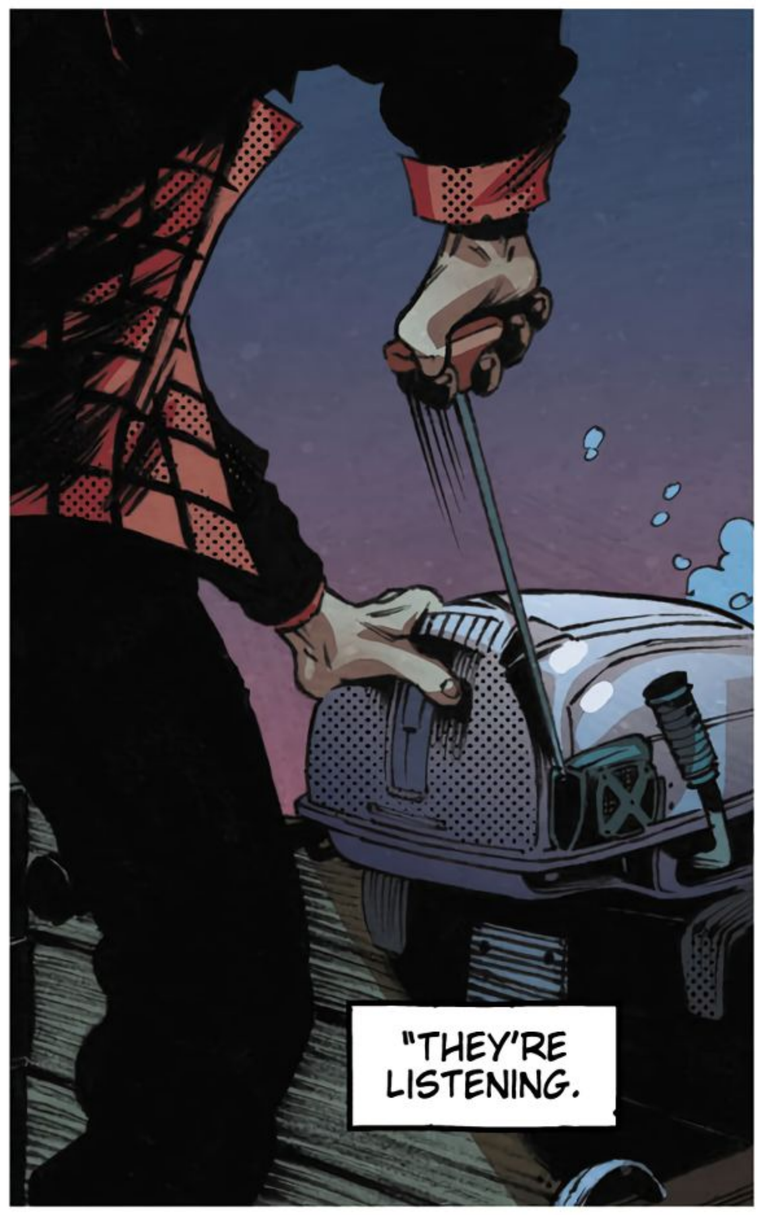
NO. DON'T STOP. PLEASE.
LOOK UP AHEAD.

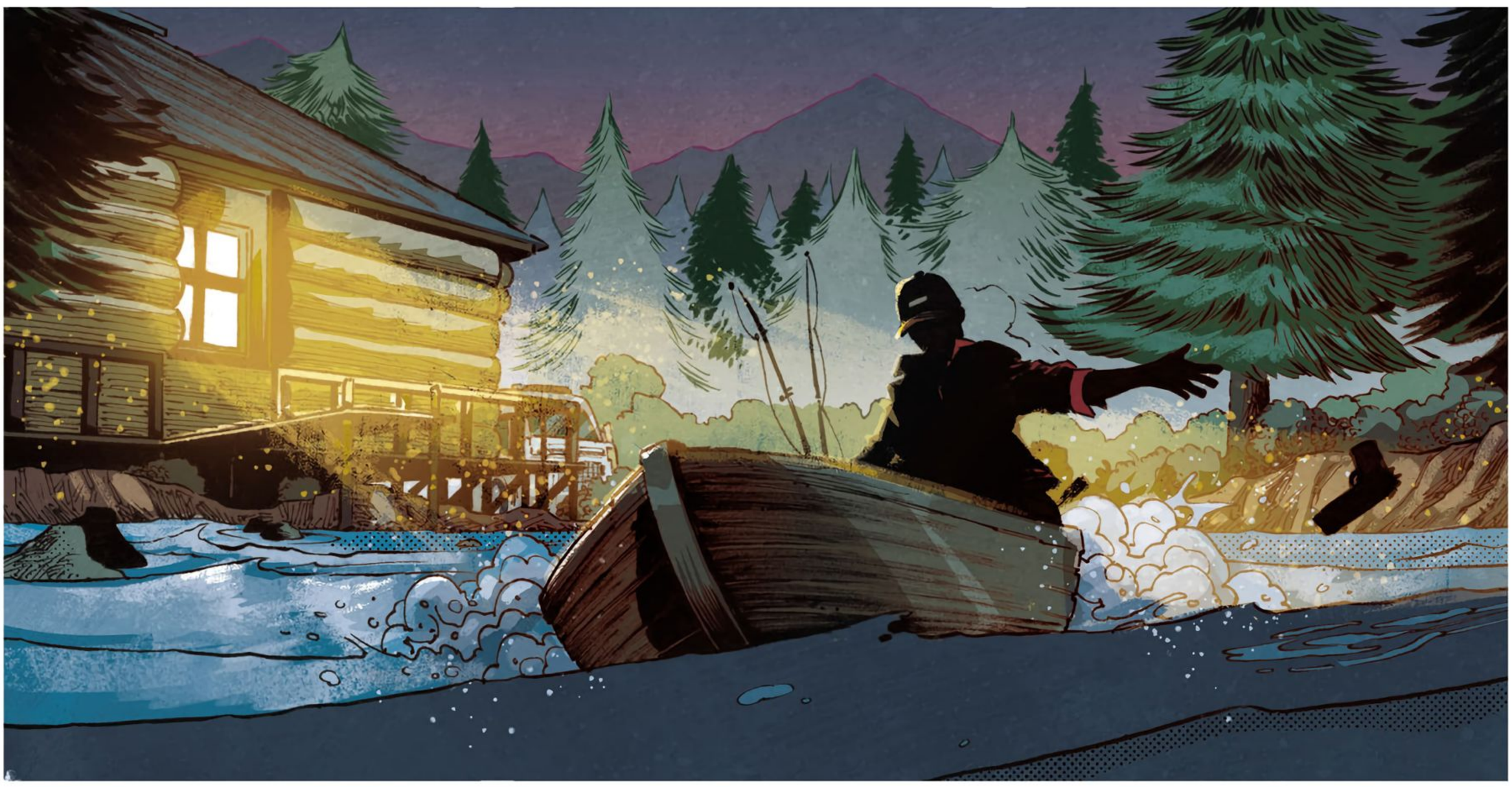

I HAD THIS BUZZY FEELING. THIS ITCHY FEELING. I GET THEM SOMETIMES. RIGHT BEFORE SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS.
START MAKING SENSE, SKINNER.


"WHOEVER DID THAT TO RIFT...I THINK THEY KNEW WE WERE COMING.
"I THINK THEY WANT US BLAMED FOR IT."

"YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS, DON'T YOU?


"IT MEANS THEY'RE WATCHING.


"THEY'RE LISTENING.

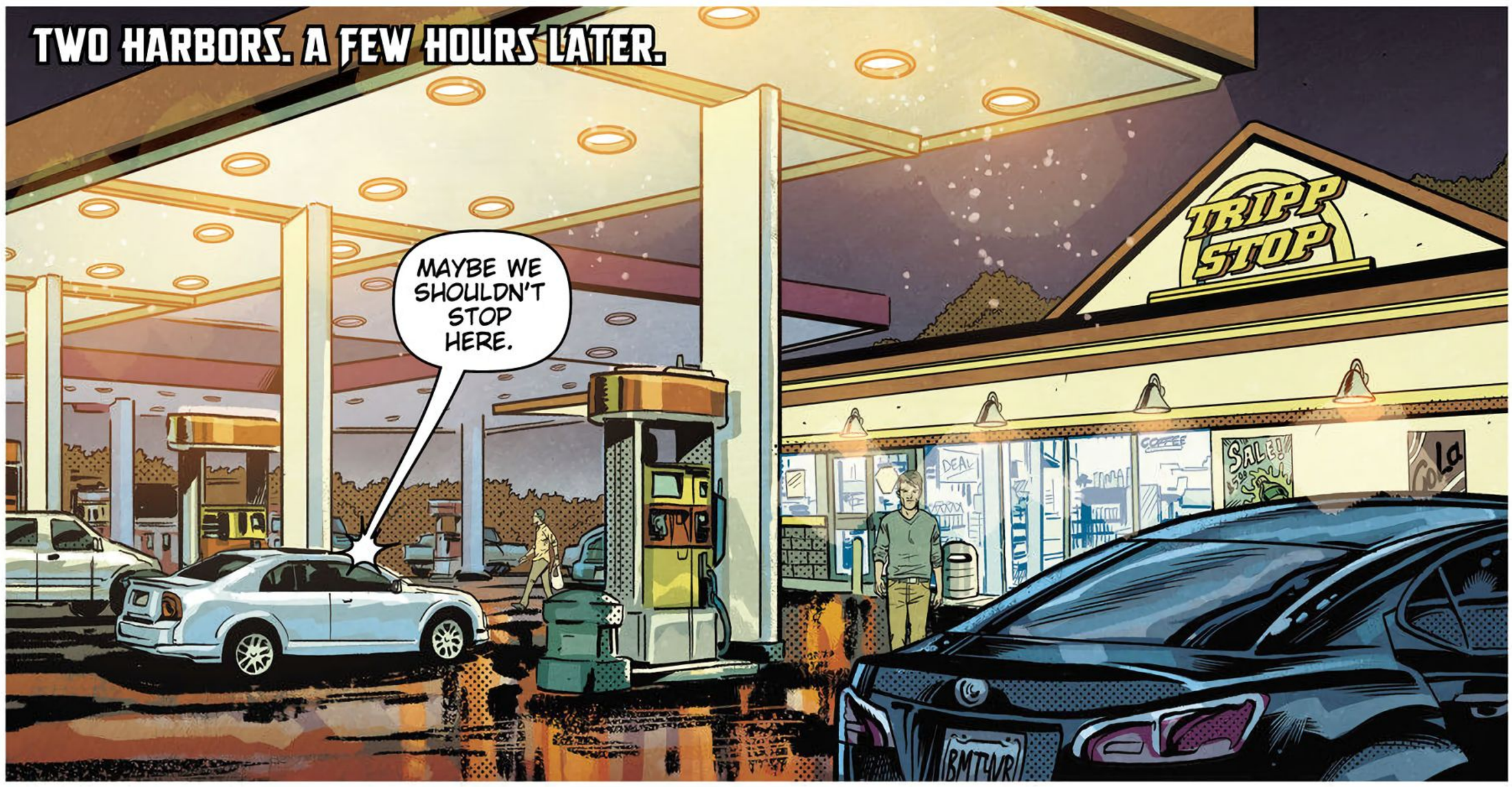


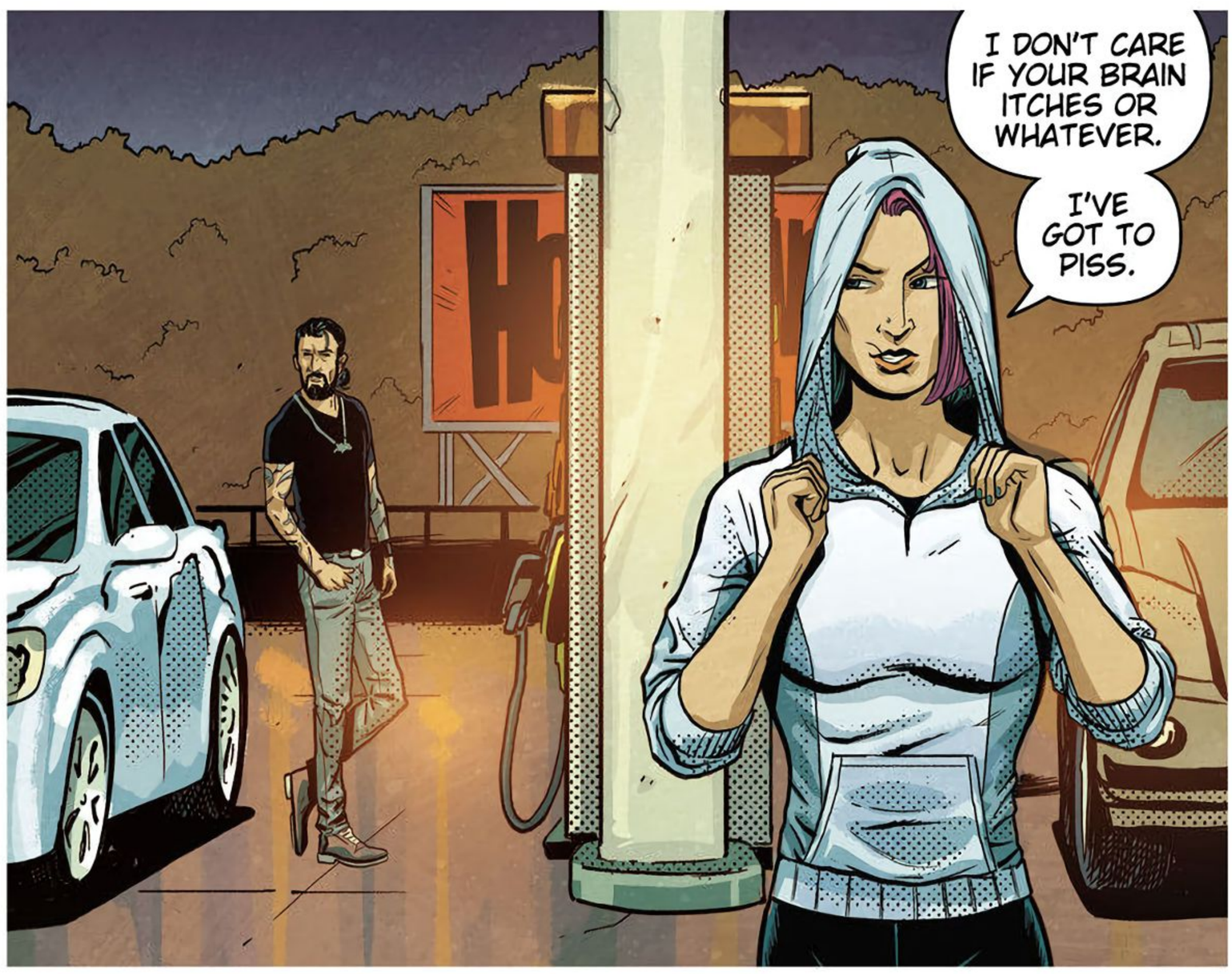
"IT MEANS THEY WANT US DISCREDITED.

"OR DEAD."

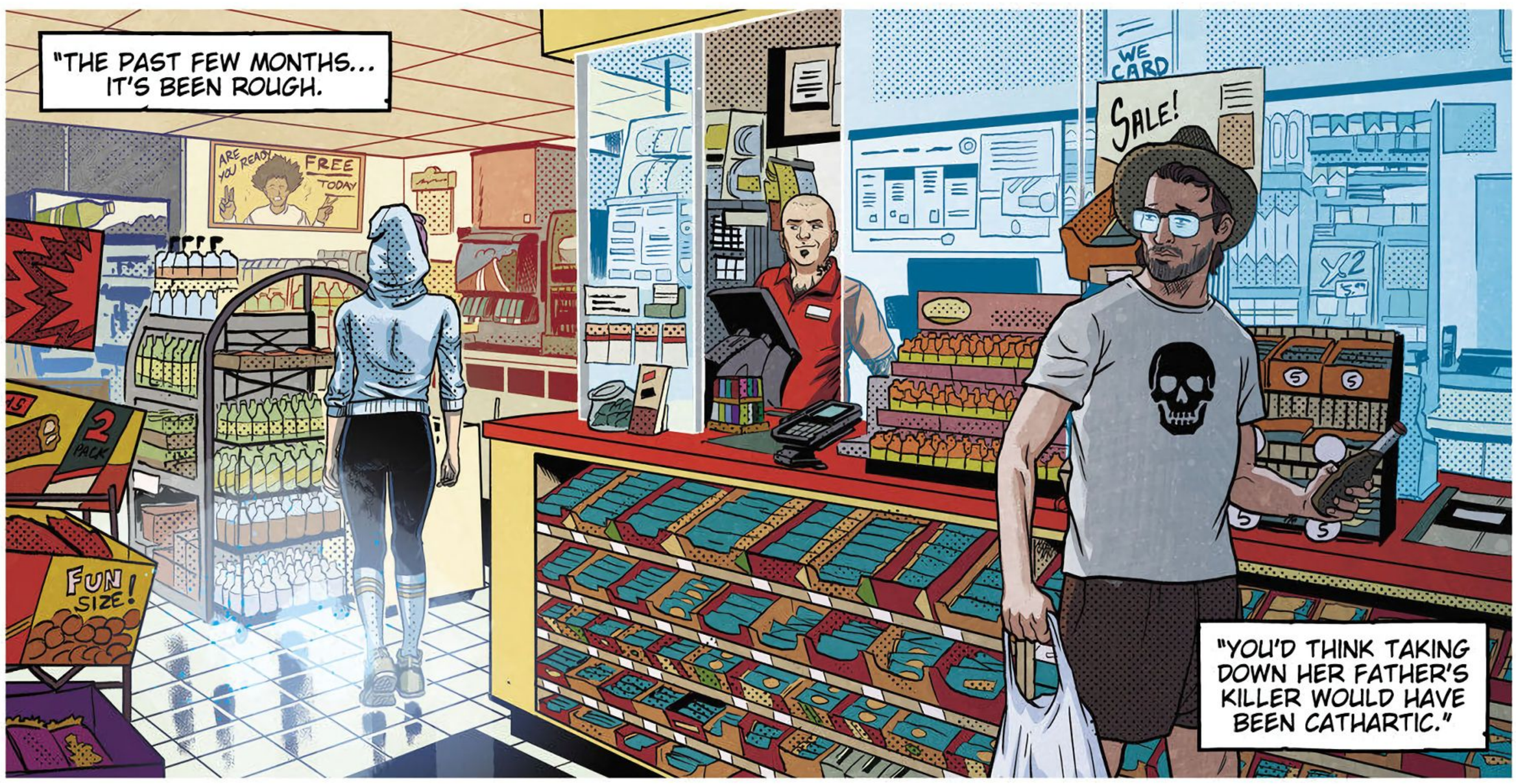
"IT MEANS WE'VE GONE FROM THE HUNTERS...

"...TO THE HUNTED."

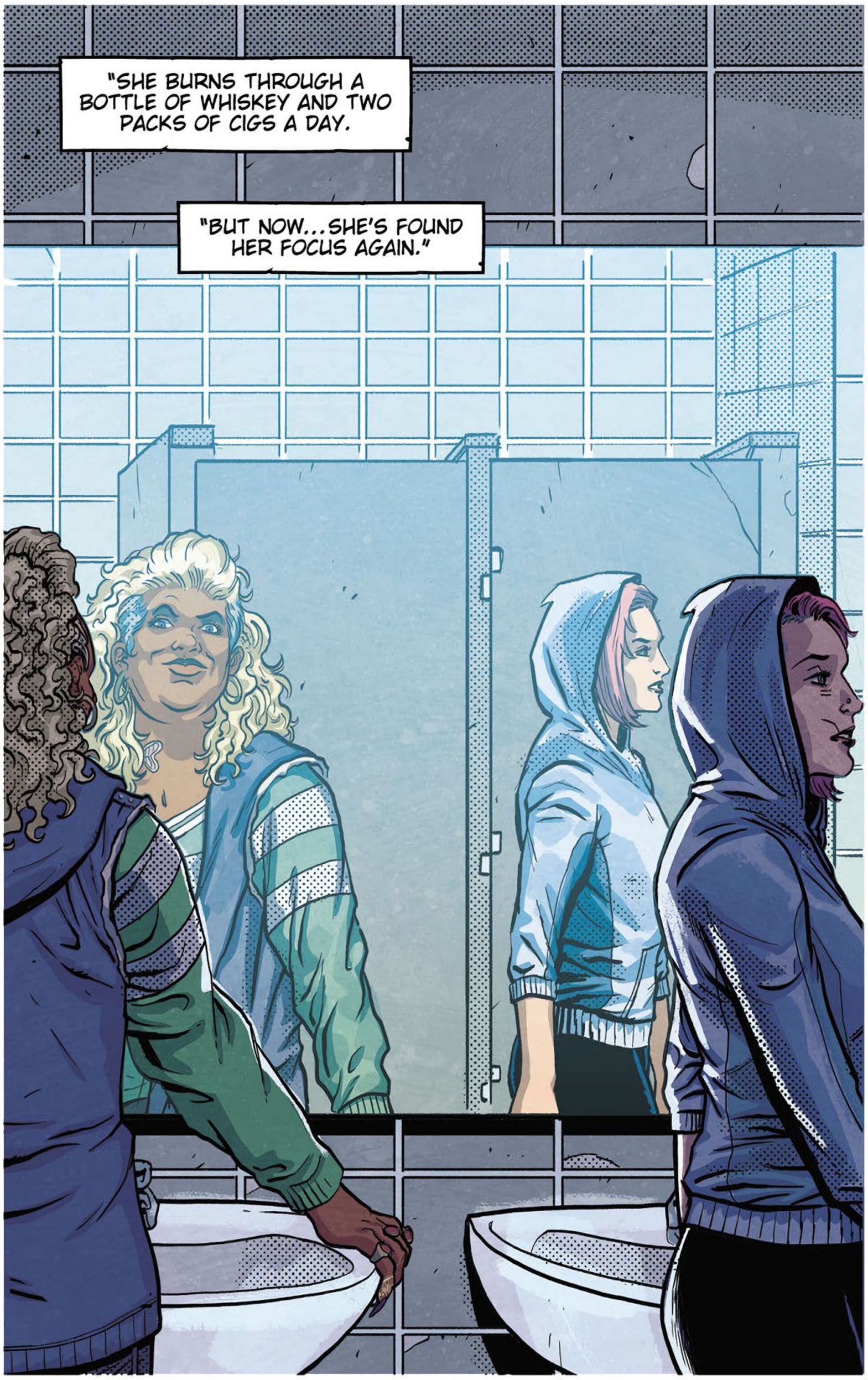

TWO HARBORS. A FEW HOURS LATER.
MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T STOP HERE.
TRIPP STOP
DEAL
COFFEE
SALE!
Cola
BMT4VR

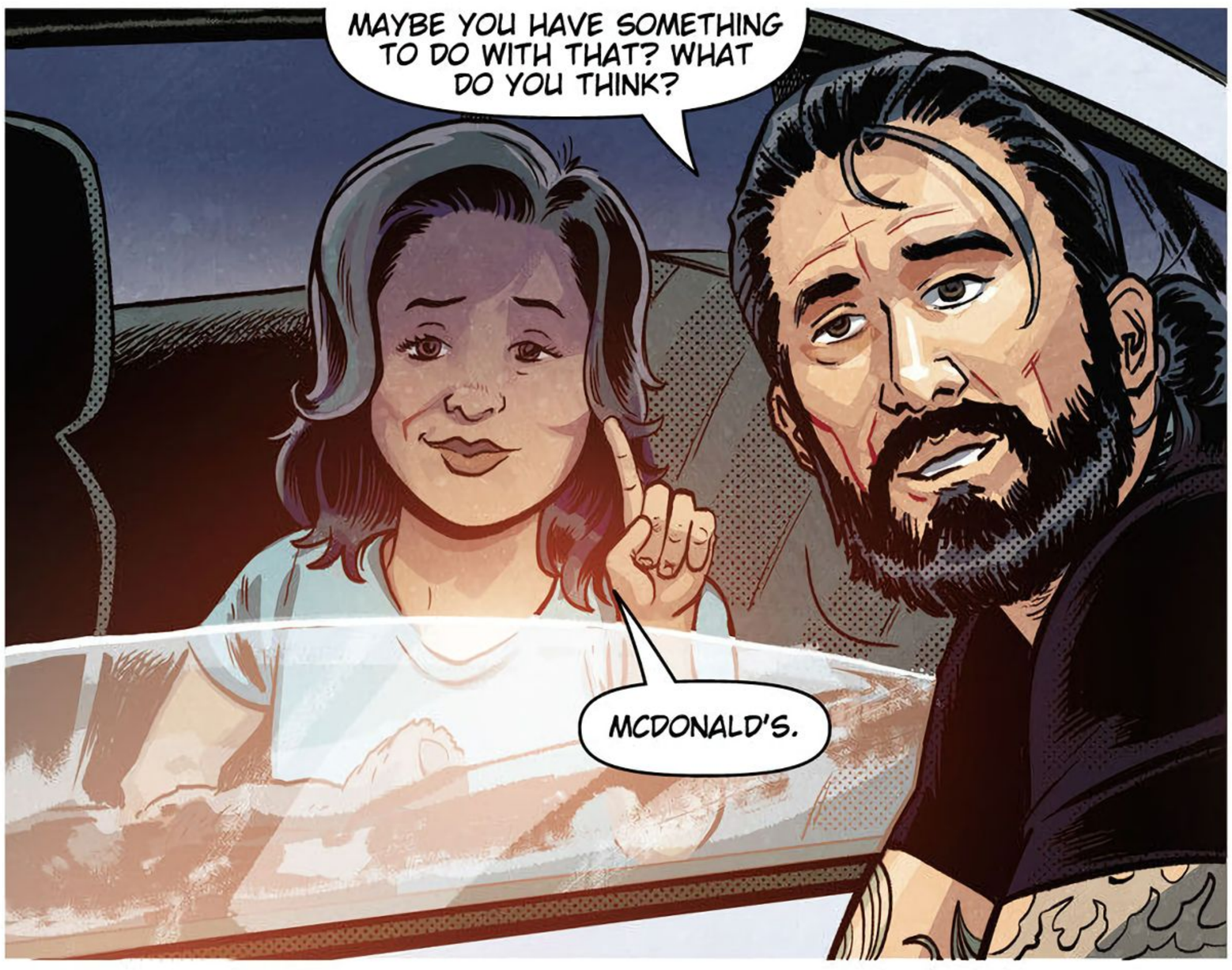

I DON'T CARE IF YOUR BRAIN ITCHES OR WHATEVER.
I'VE GOT TO PISS.

YOU KNOW... SHE'S ACTUALLY DOING BETTER.
I KNOW THAT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT IT'S TRUE.


"THE PAST FEW MONTHS... IT'S BEEN ROUGH.
ARE YOU READY
FREE TODAY
2 PACK
FUN SIZE!
WE CARD
SALE!
"YOU'D THINK TAKING DOWN HER FATHER'S KILLER WOULD HAVE BEEN CATHARTIC."

BUT IT'S LIKE SHE LOST ALL DIRECTION. DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
I STOPPED DRINKING, AND SHE STARTED.

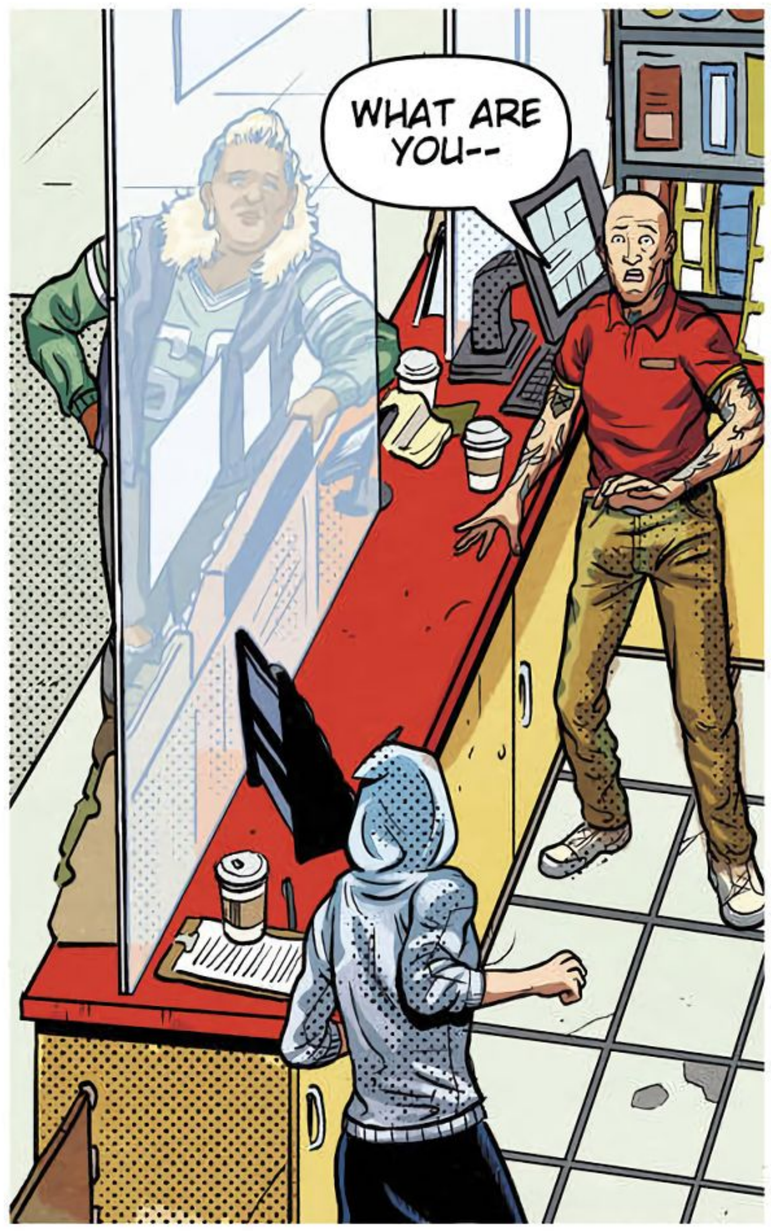

"SHE BURNS THROUGH A BOTTLE OF WHISKEY AND TWO PACKS OF CIGS A DAY.
"BUT NOW...SHE'S FOUND HER FOCUS AGAIN."


MAYBE YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT? WHAT DO YOU THINK?
MCDONALD'S.

WHAT?
GAS STATION STOP
MCDONALD'S.

WANT SOME BANANAS WITH THAT?
EXCUSE ME?

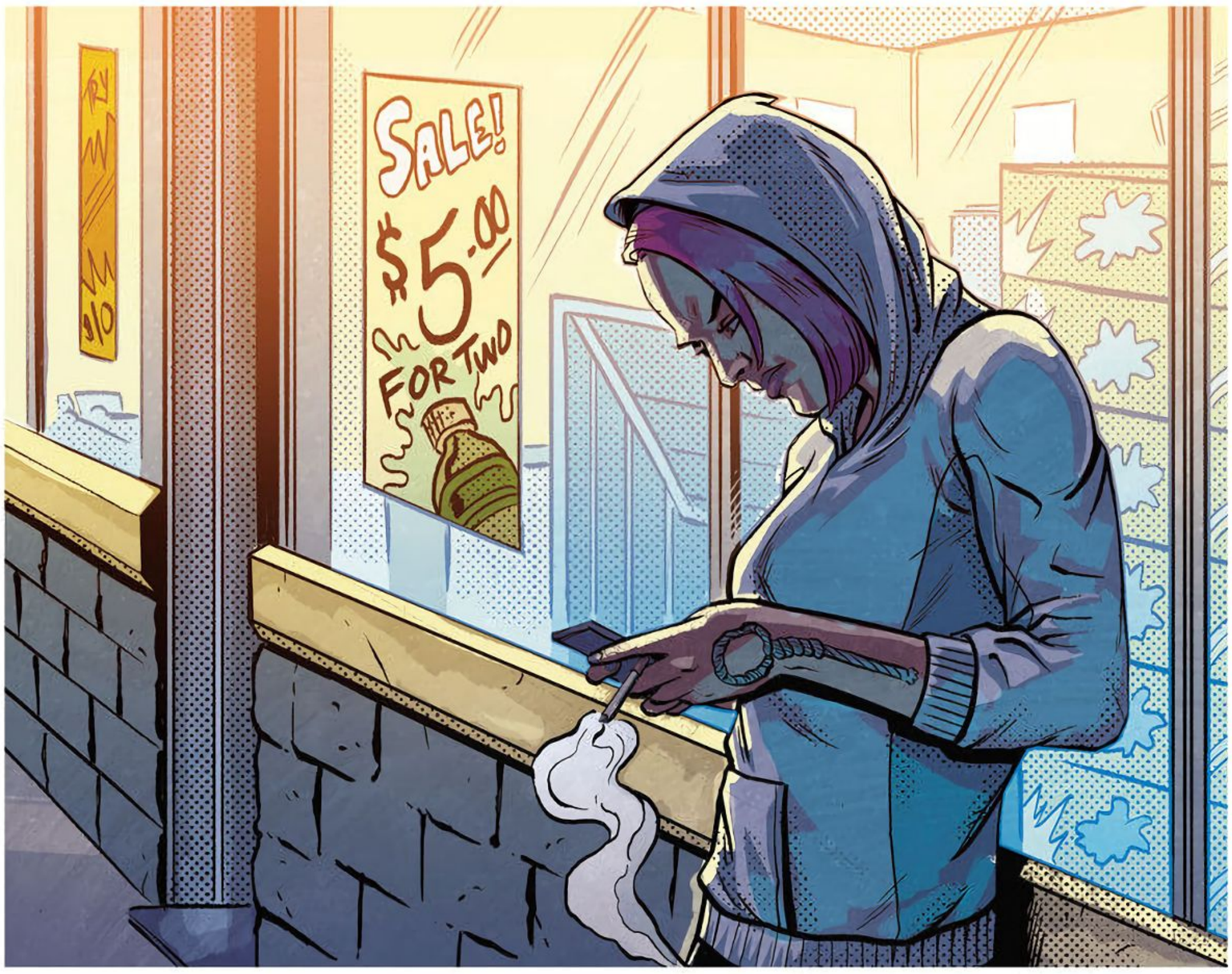
I SAID DO YOU WANT SOME BANANAS WITH THAT?
I JUST... DON'T HAVE THE ENERGY FOR THIS. PLEASE RING ME UP.
IT'S JUST THAT BANANAS ARE ON SALE RIGHT NOW. AND I BET YOU'D LOVE SOME.

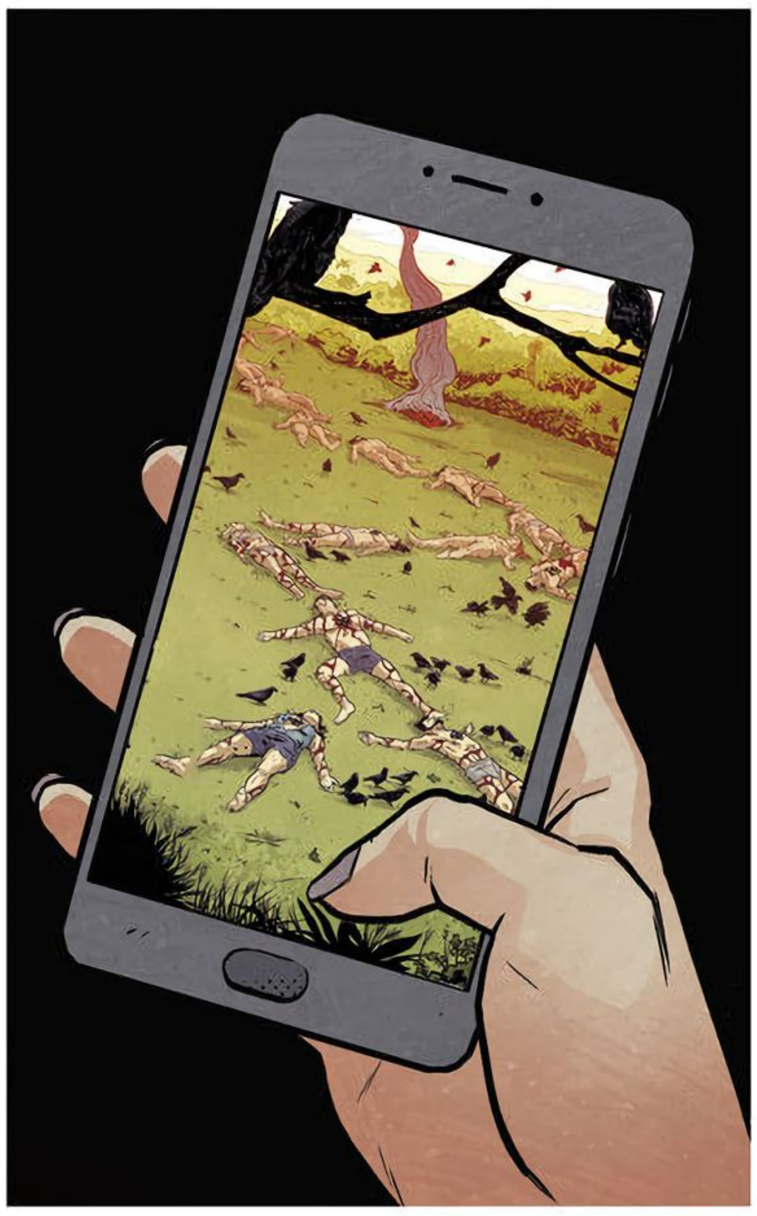

WHAT ARE YOU--

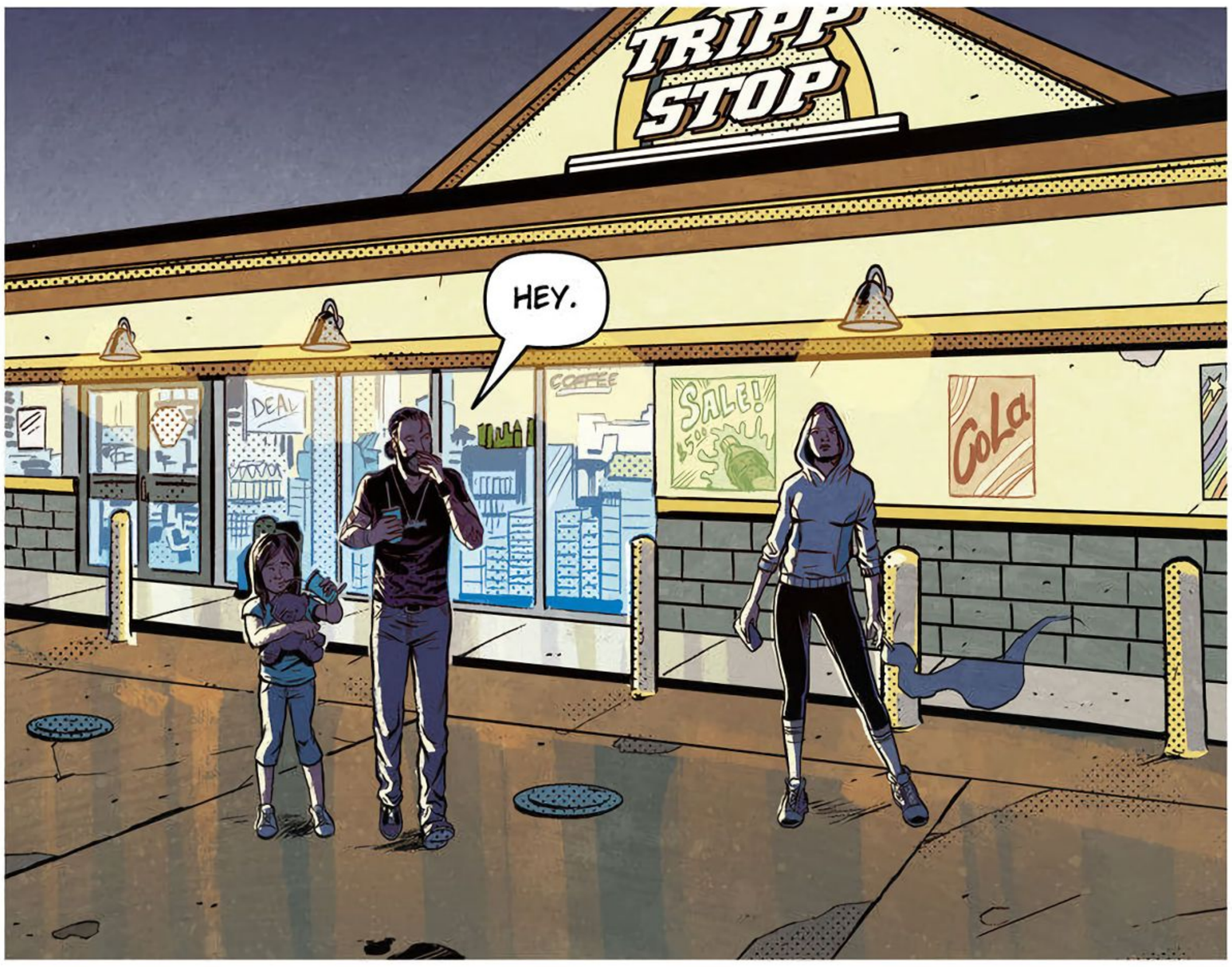
THAK

$12.40
$11.60
HAWKS

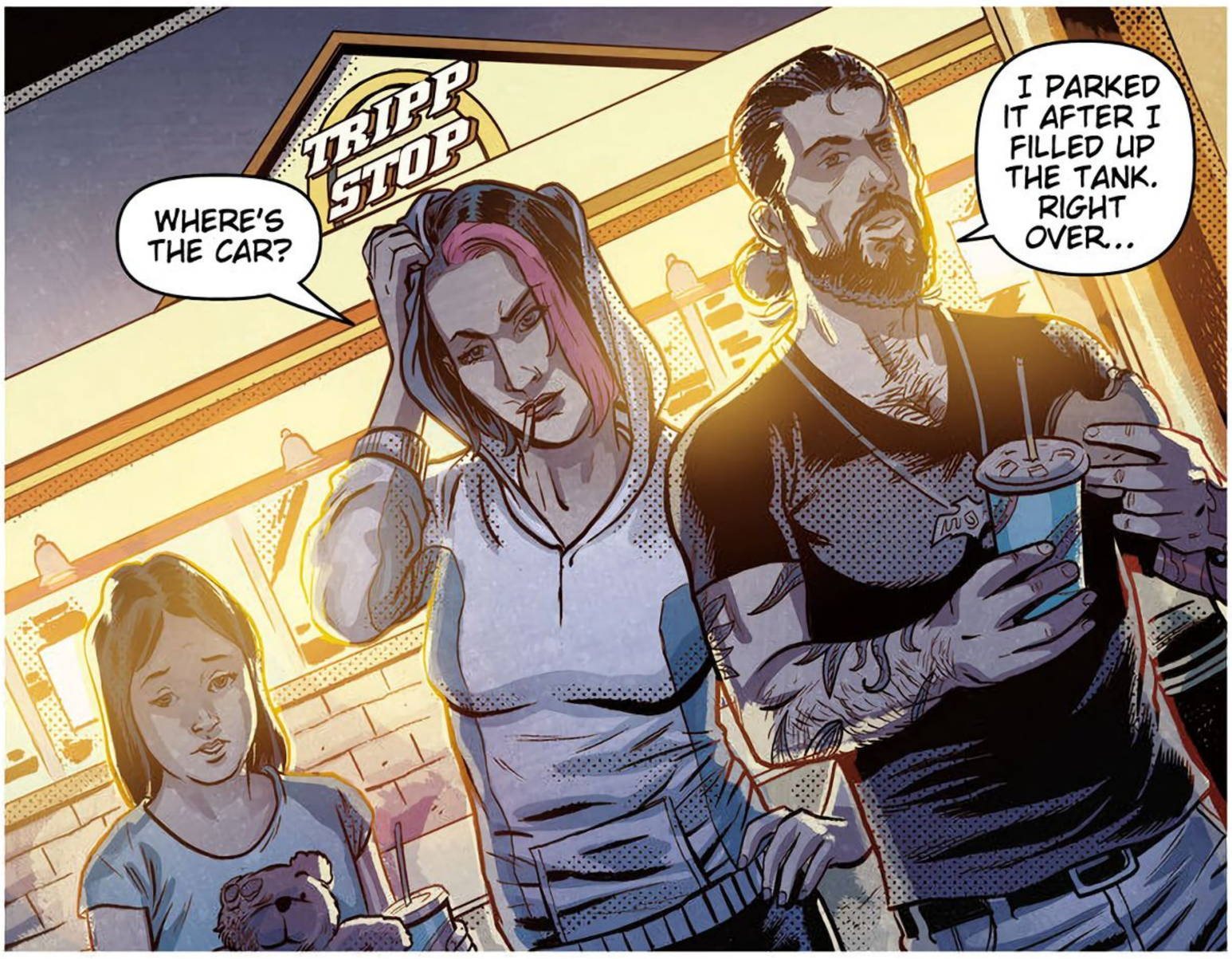
POTATO


SALE!
$5.00
FOR TWO




TRIPP STOP
HEY.
DEAL
COFFEE
SALE!
COLA

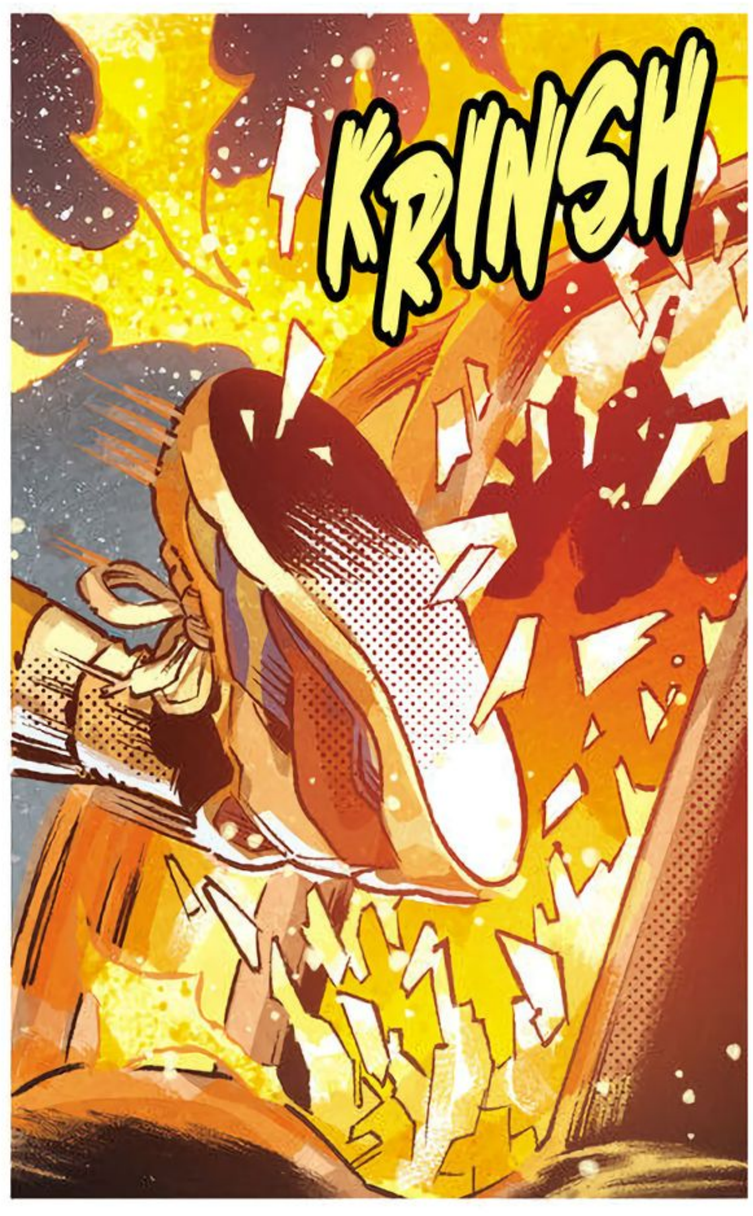
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T THINK WE SHOULD STOP HERE.
SHE WAS HUNGRY. WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

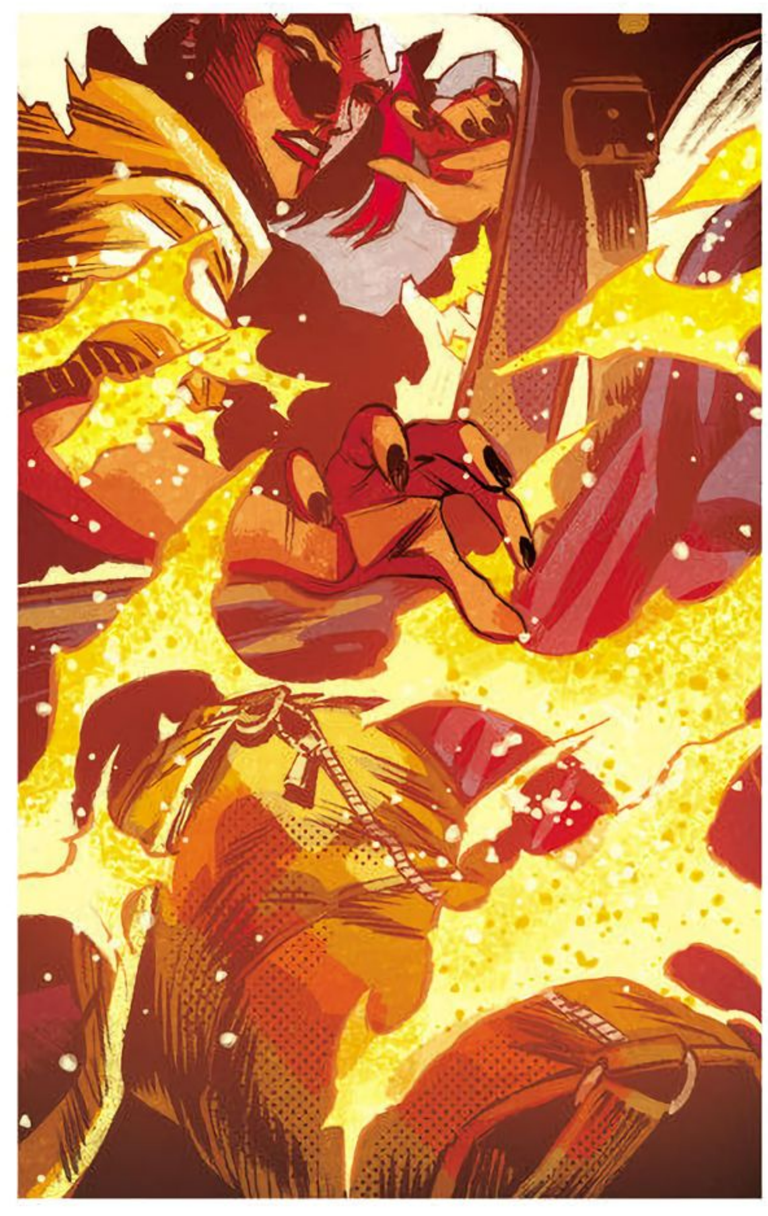

TRIPP STOP
WHERE'S THE CAR?
I PARKED IT AFTER I FILLED UP THE TANK. RIGHT OVER..

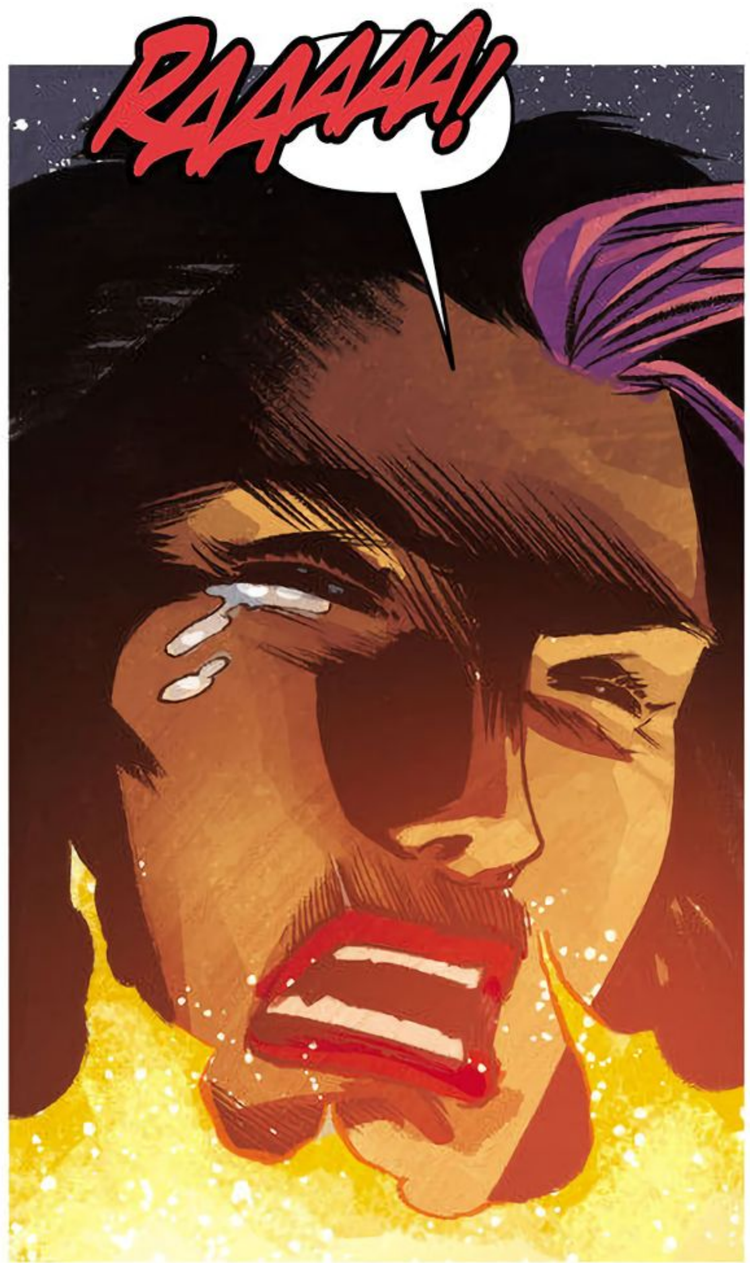
PARKING
PARKING
...THERE.

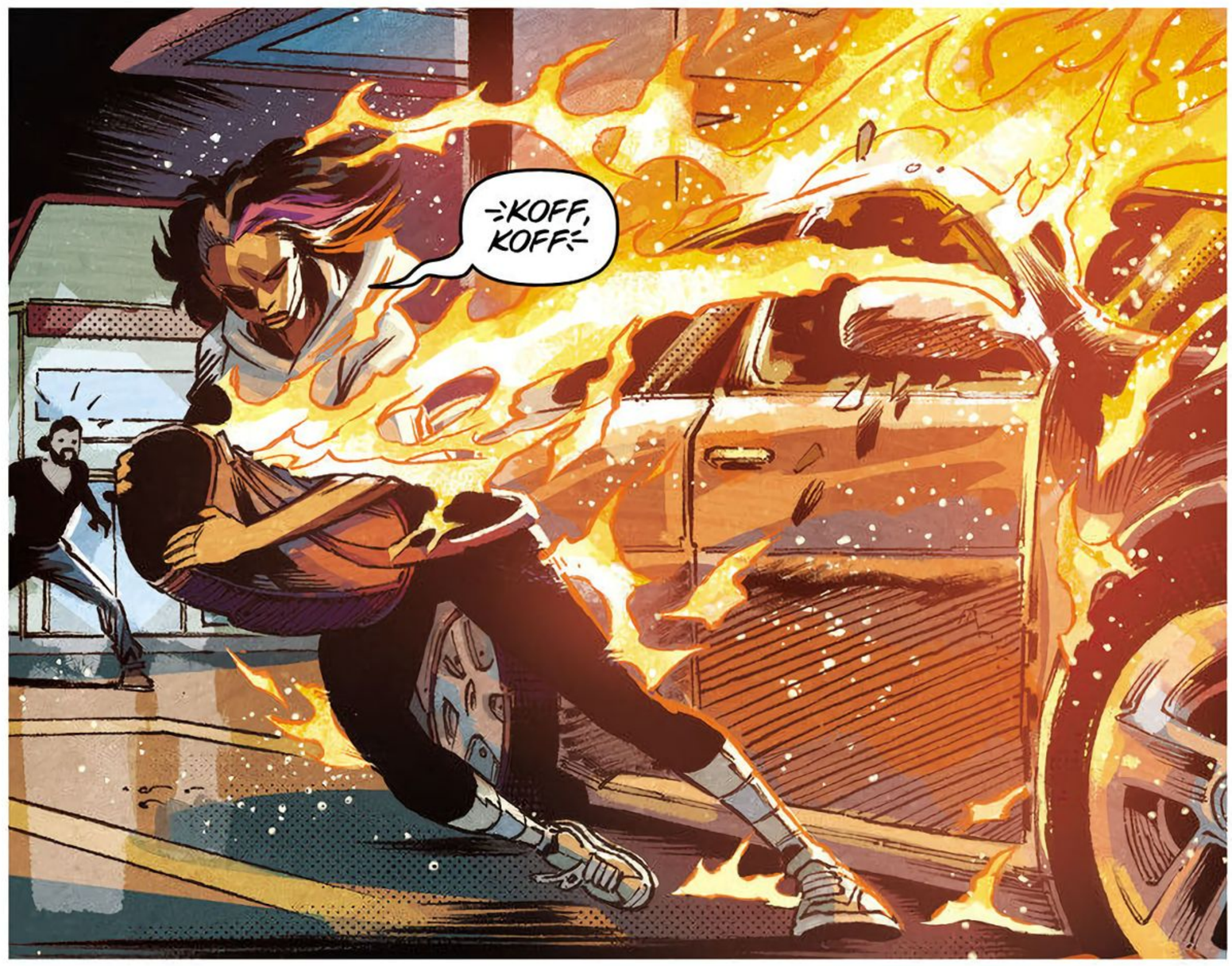
BRENT
NICKFIL

TWO HARBORS, MINNESOTA.

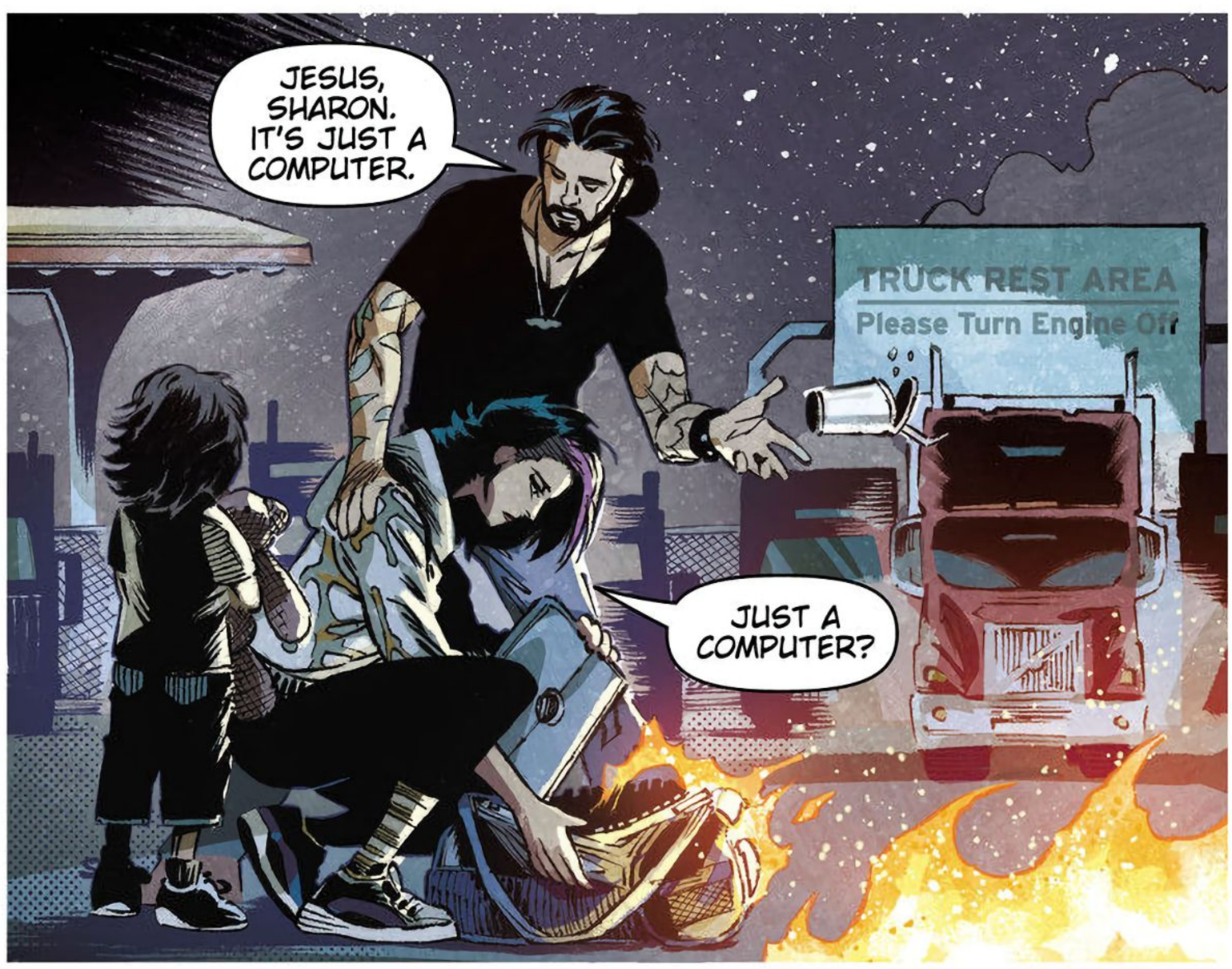





RAAAAA!

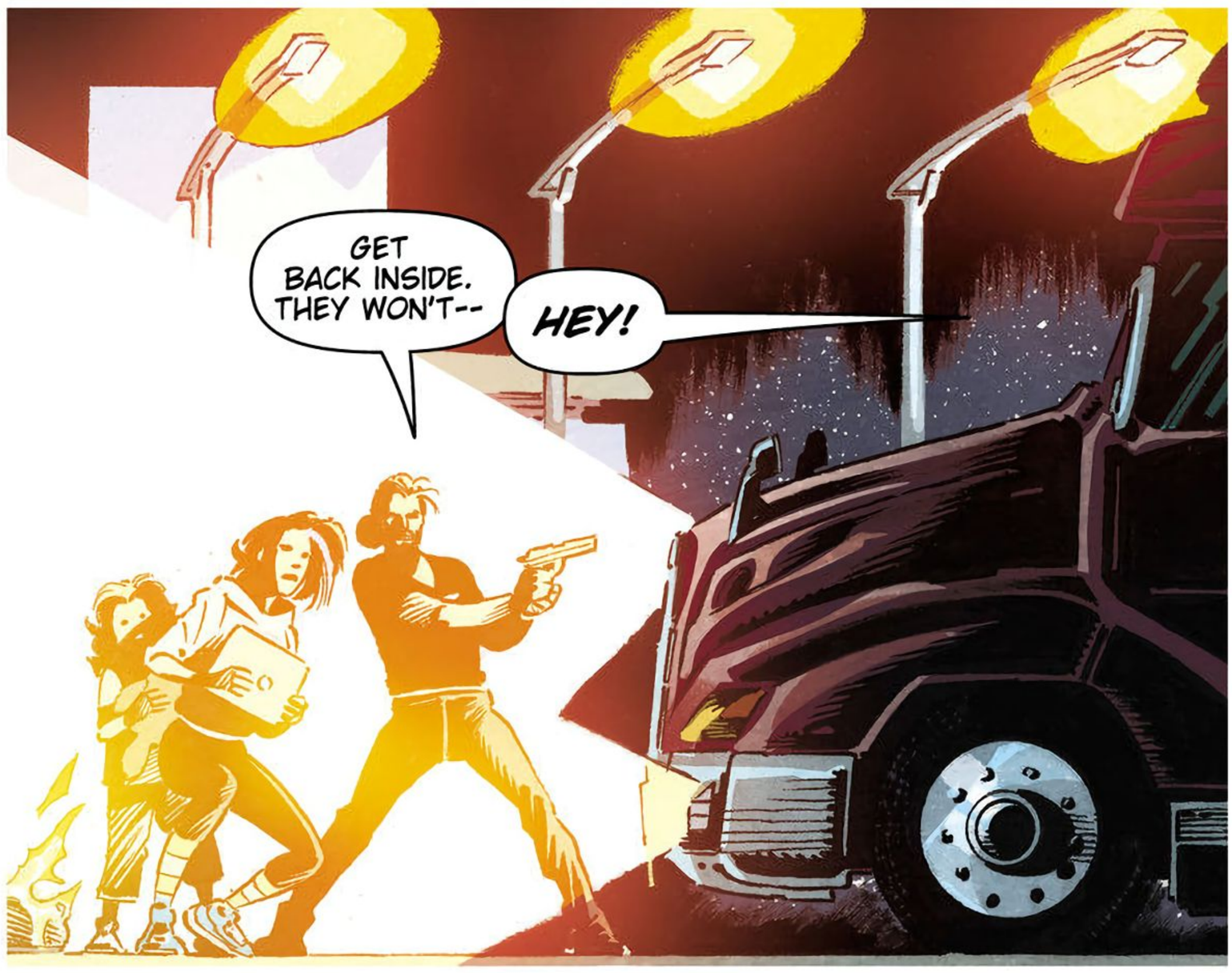

-KOFF, KOFF-

SPLISH
TRUCK REST
Please Turn En


JESUS, SHARON. IT'S JUST A COMPUTER.
TRUCK REST AREA
Please Turn Engine Off
JUST A COMPUTER?

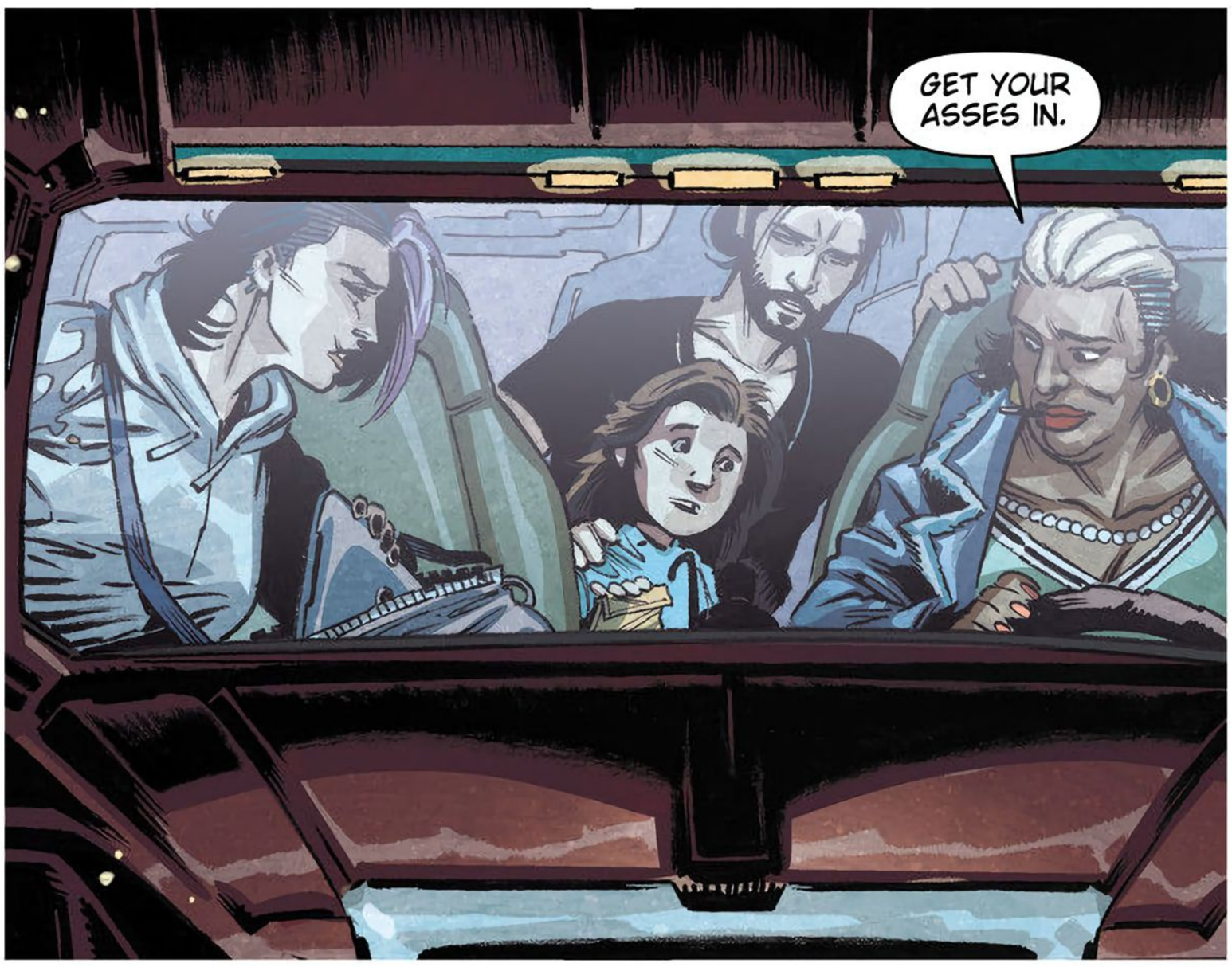
THIS IS THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS TO ME.
WE NEED TO GO...

VROOM
NOW!

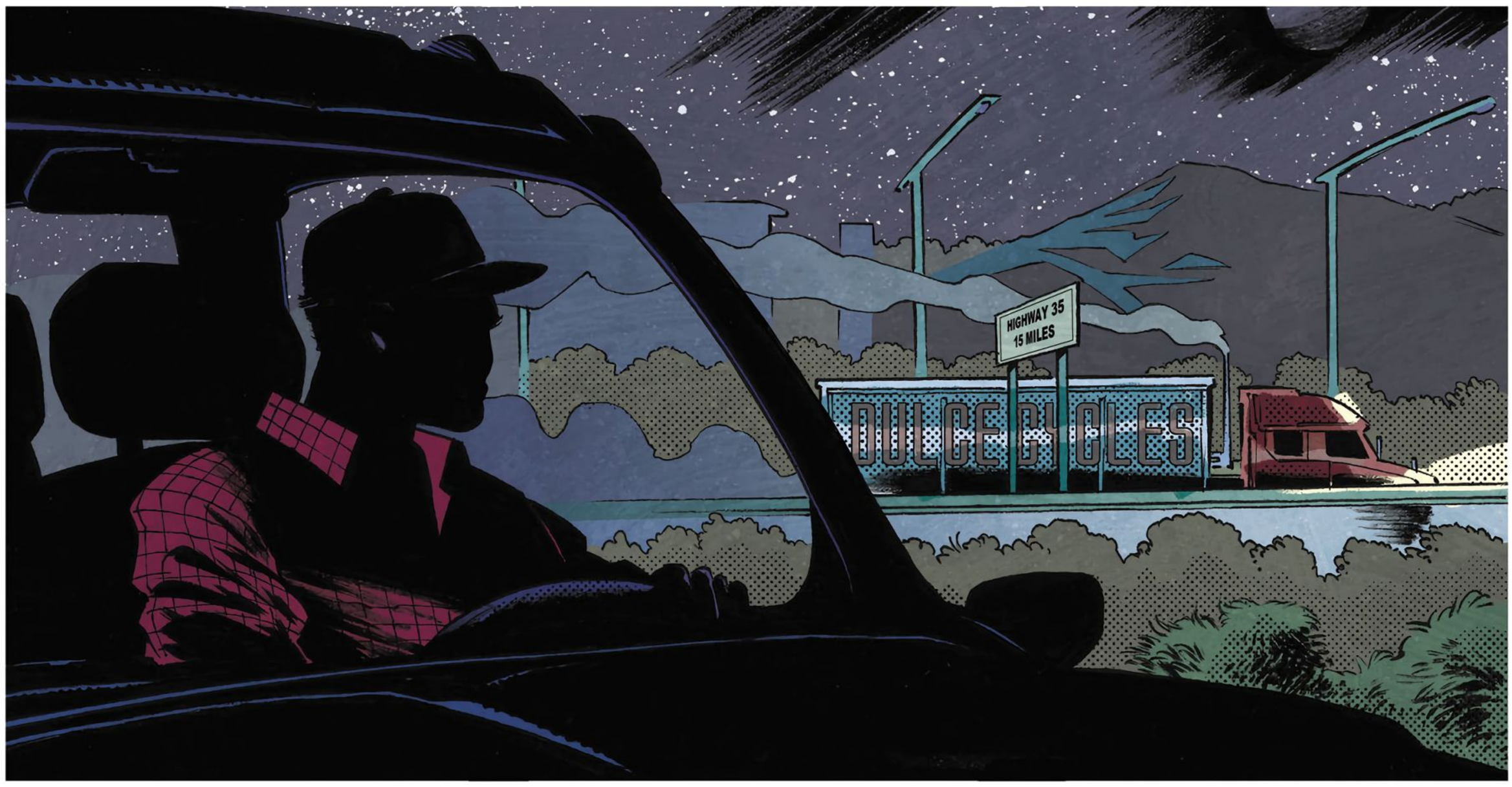

GET BACK INSIDE. THEY WON'T--
HEY!

YOU ALL LOOKING FOR A RIDE?

WHO...
IT'S OKAY. GO.

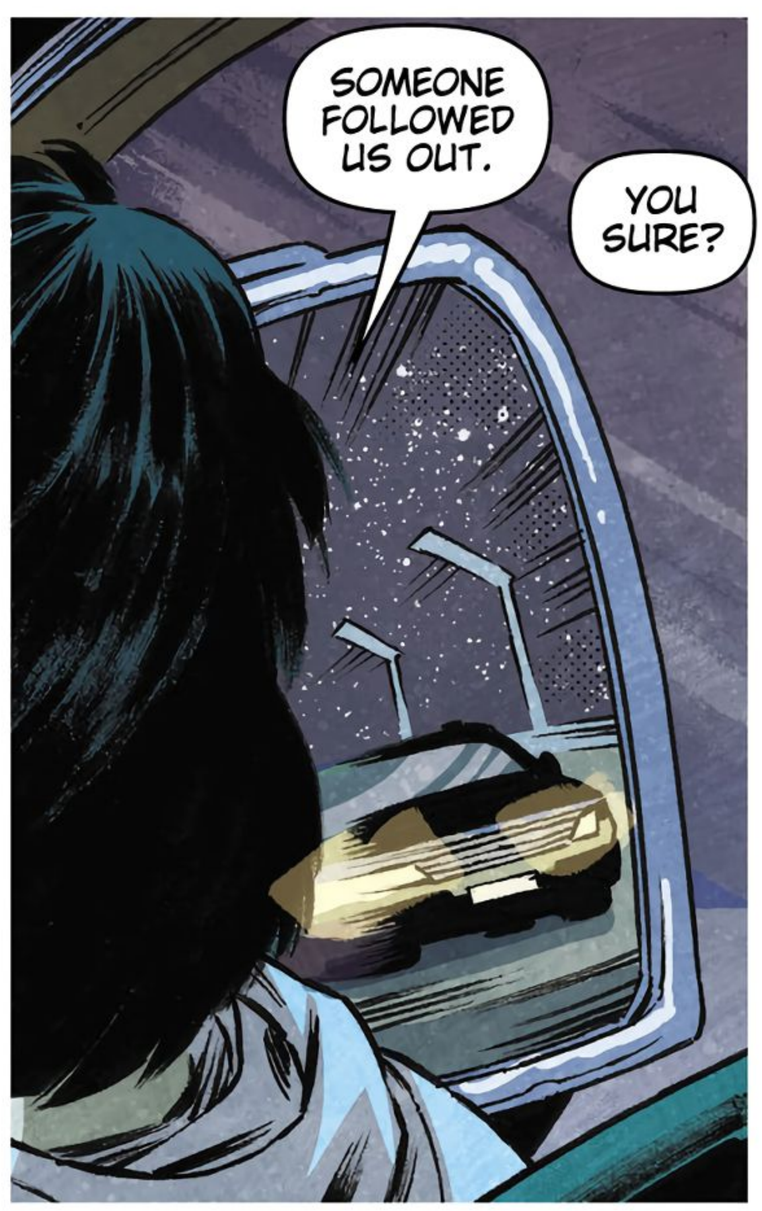

GET YOUR ASSES IN.

TRIPP STOP
COFFEE
GAS
AND LET'S GET THE HELL OUT.

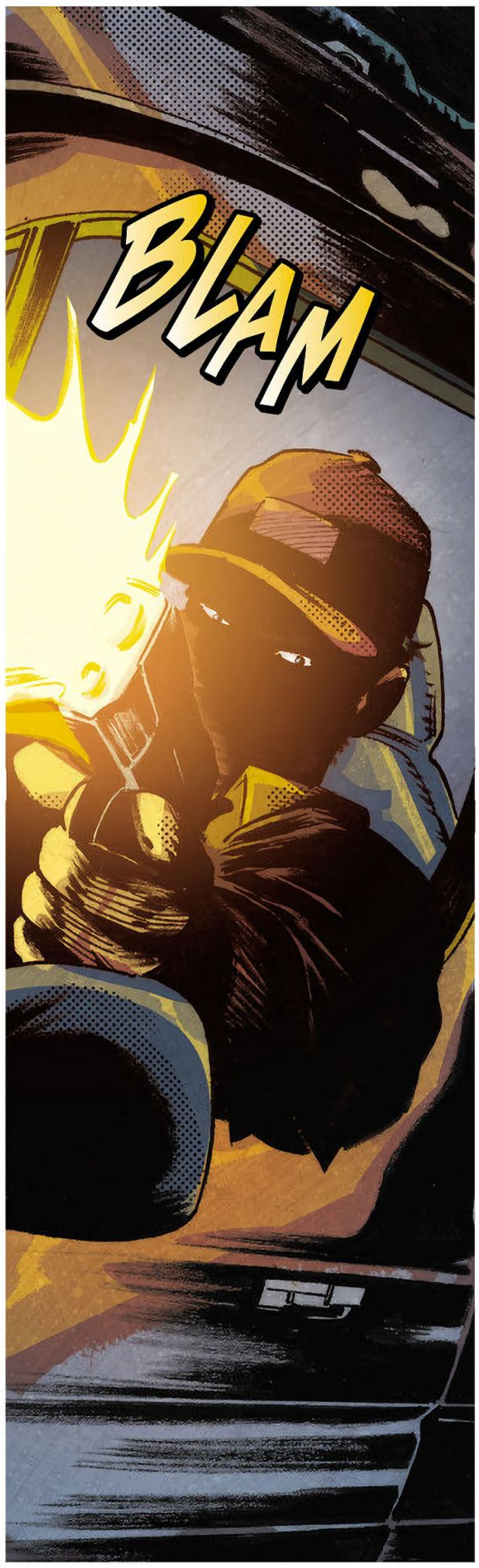

HIGHWAY 35
15 MILES
DULCE BICYCLES

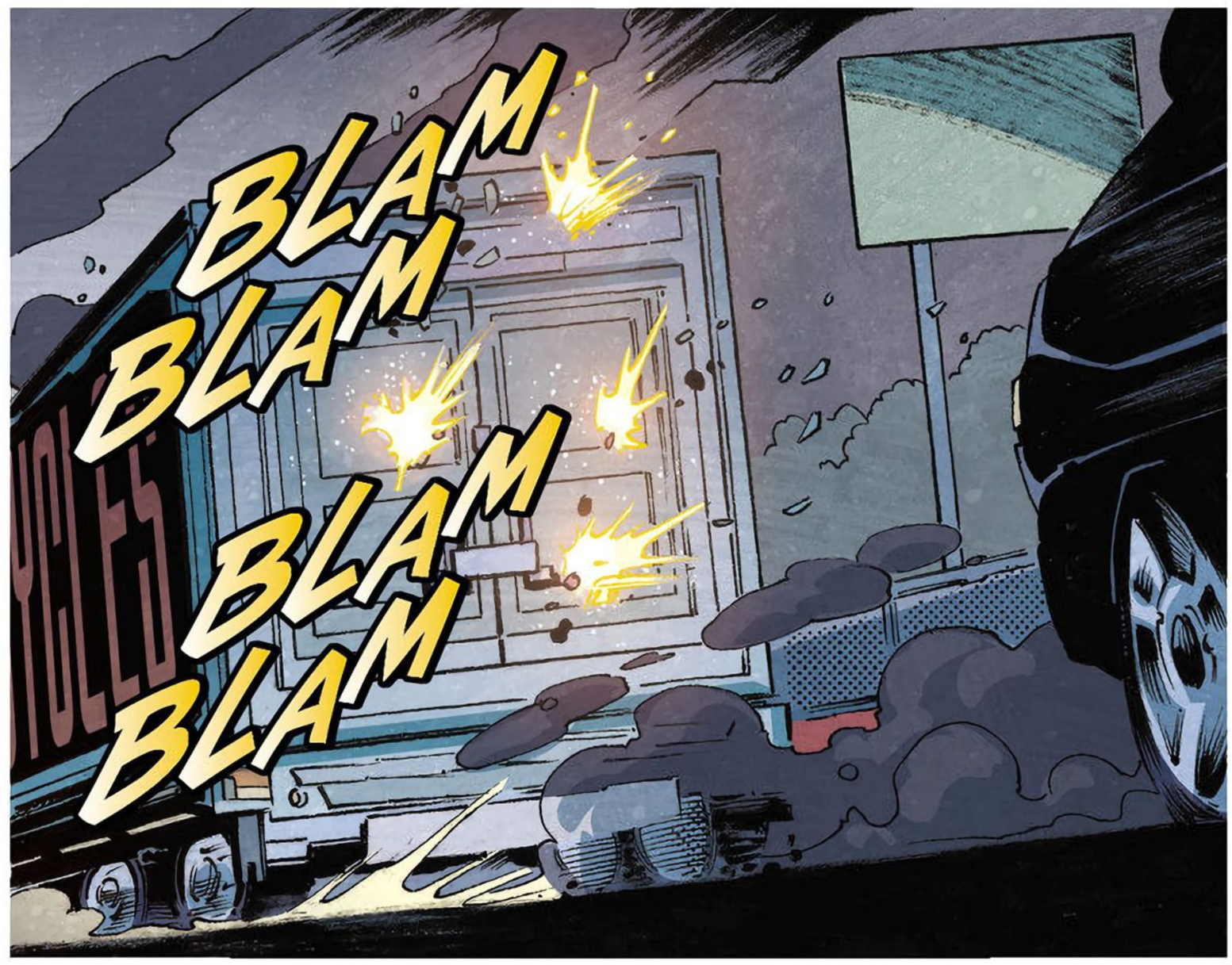
DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF TROUBLE YOU'RE IN. DON'T KNOW THAT I WANT TO KNOW.
BUT I APPRECIATE WHAT YOU DID FOR ME. BACK THERE IN THE STORE.
WHAT DID SHE DO? WHO ARE YOU?

CB HANDLE IS DJ PANCAKE, AND THAT'S AS FRIENDLY AS WE'RE GETTING FOR NOW.


SOMEONE FOLLOWED US OUT.
YOU SURE?

PRETTY SURE.
KRINSH


BLAM


BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

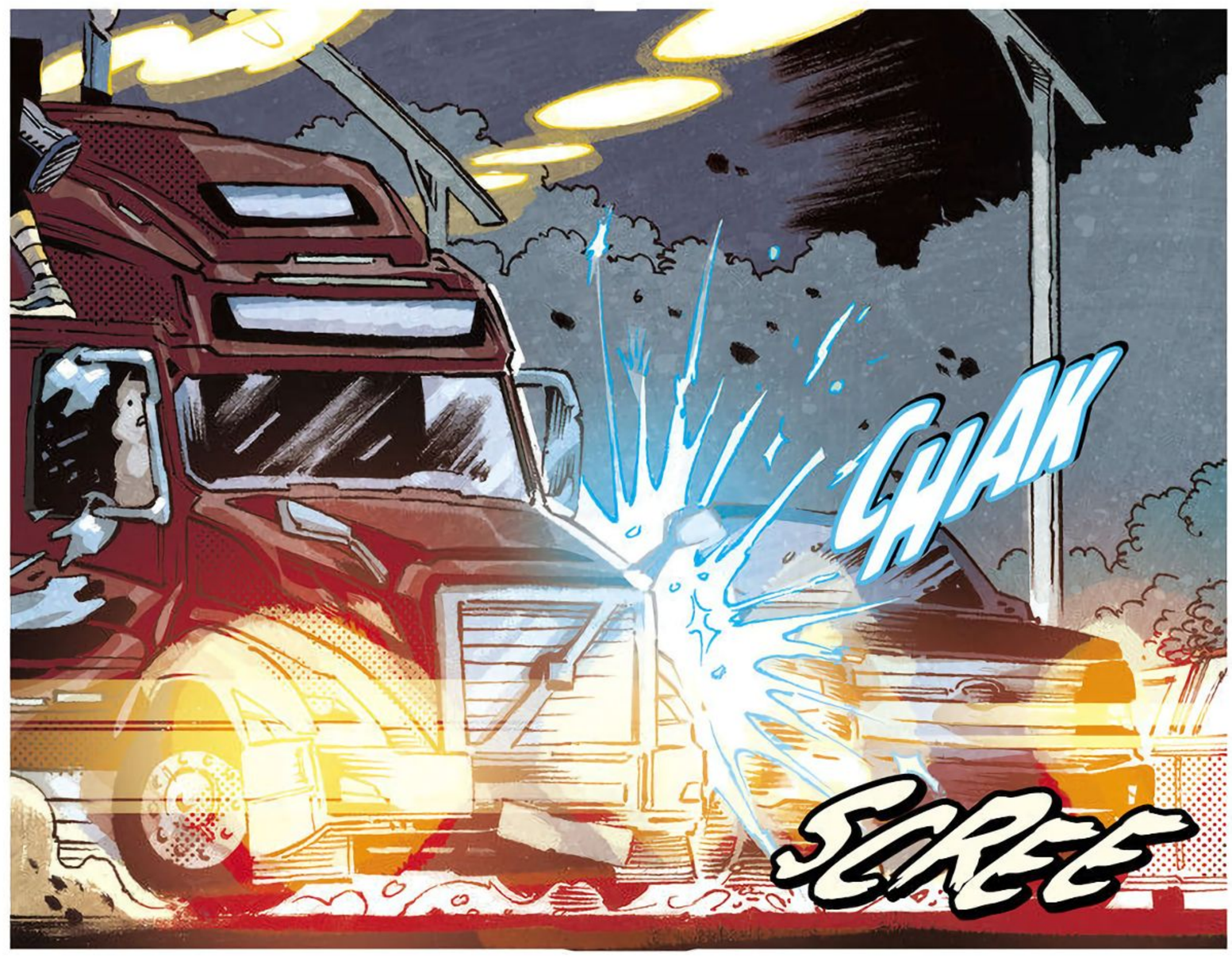
GIVE ME THE GUN.
OH, JESUS. OH, LORD. PLEASE TELL ME I DIDN'T MAKE A MISTAKE HELPING THESE FOLKS OUT.

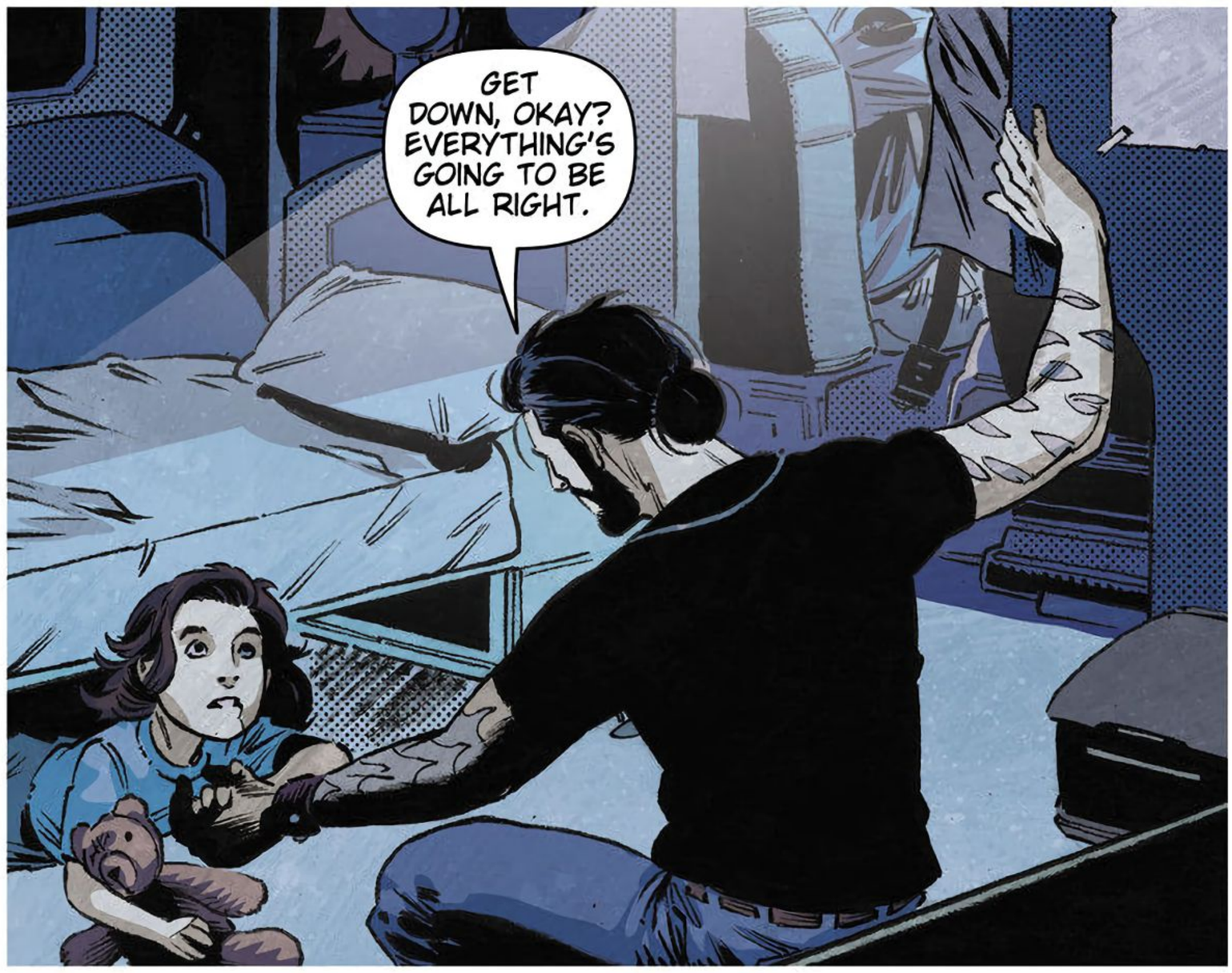
BE CAREFUL.
WE'RE PAST CAREFUL.

DON'T WORRY. WE'RE THE GOOD GUYS.
PSHAW-- YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?

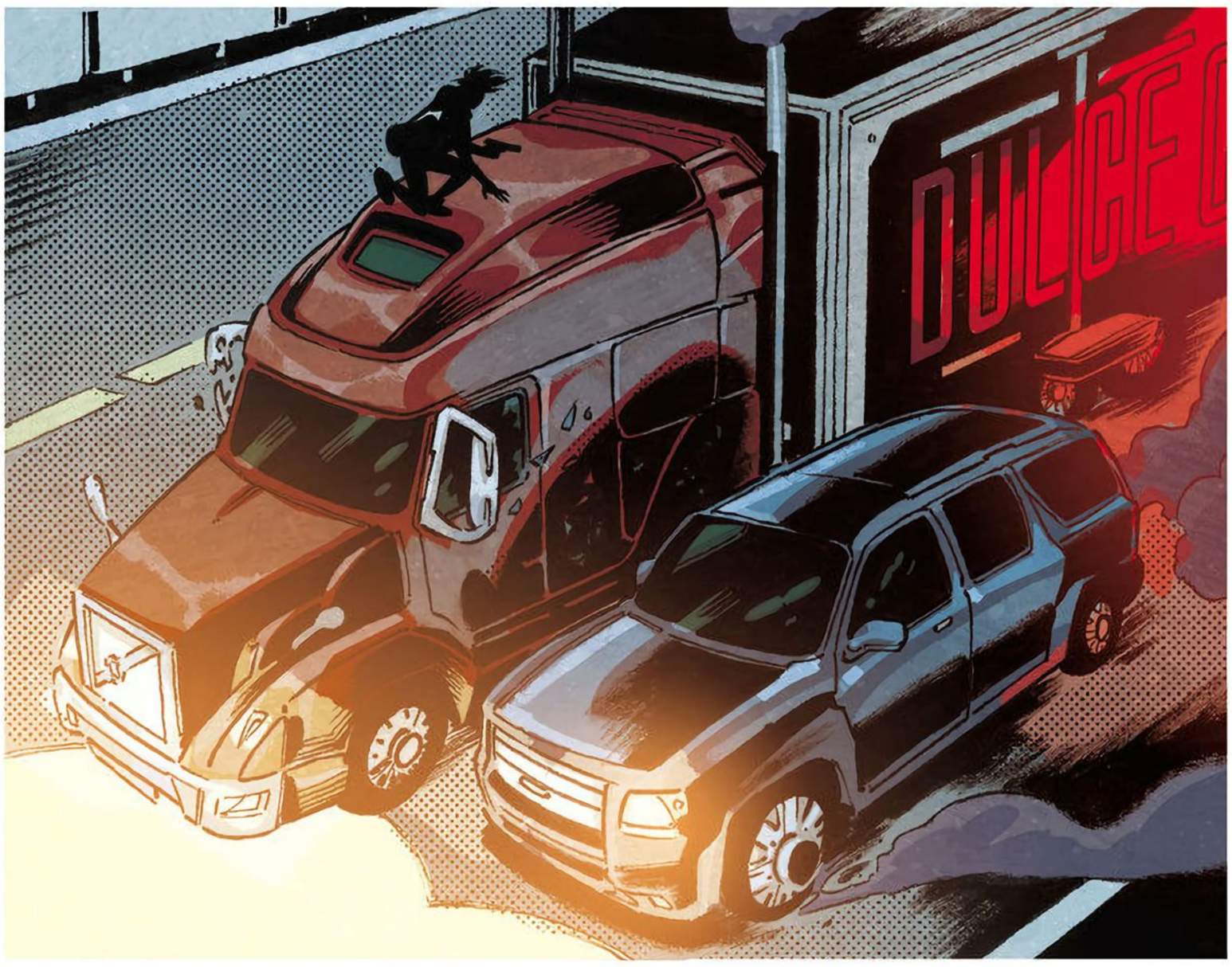
SPASH

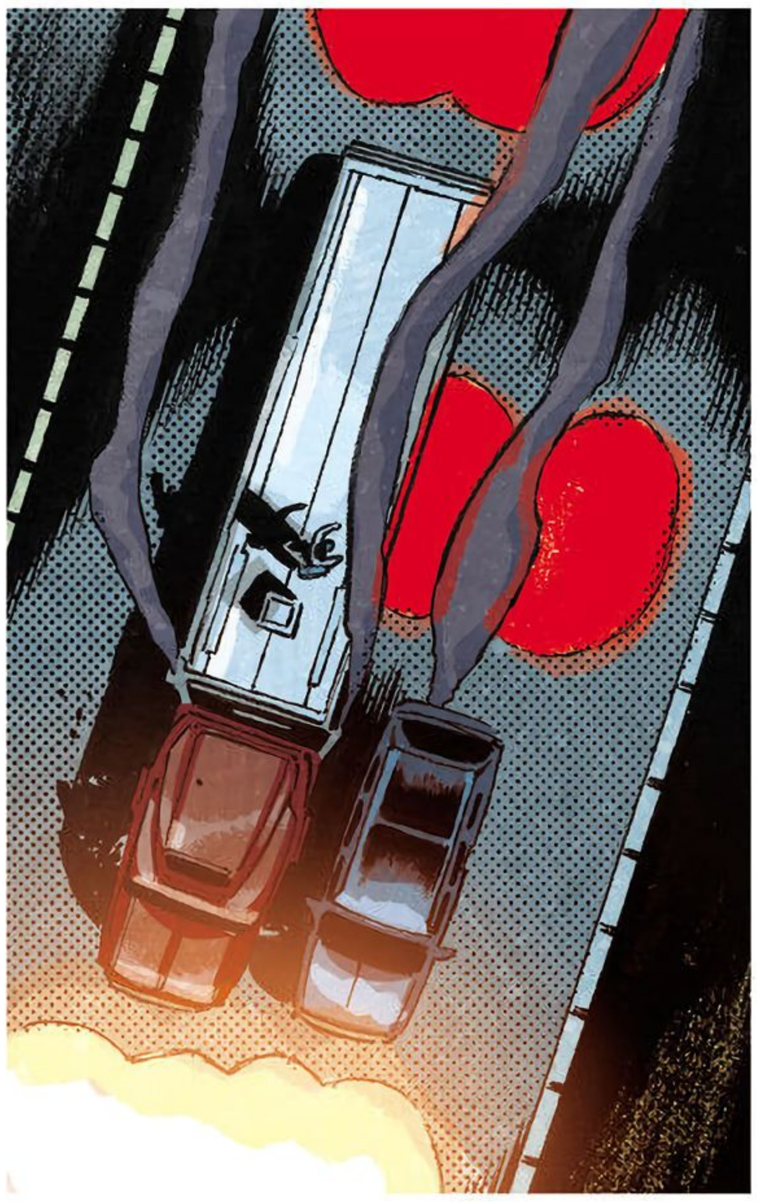

CHAK
SCREE


GET DOWN, OKAY? EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.

SHARON?

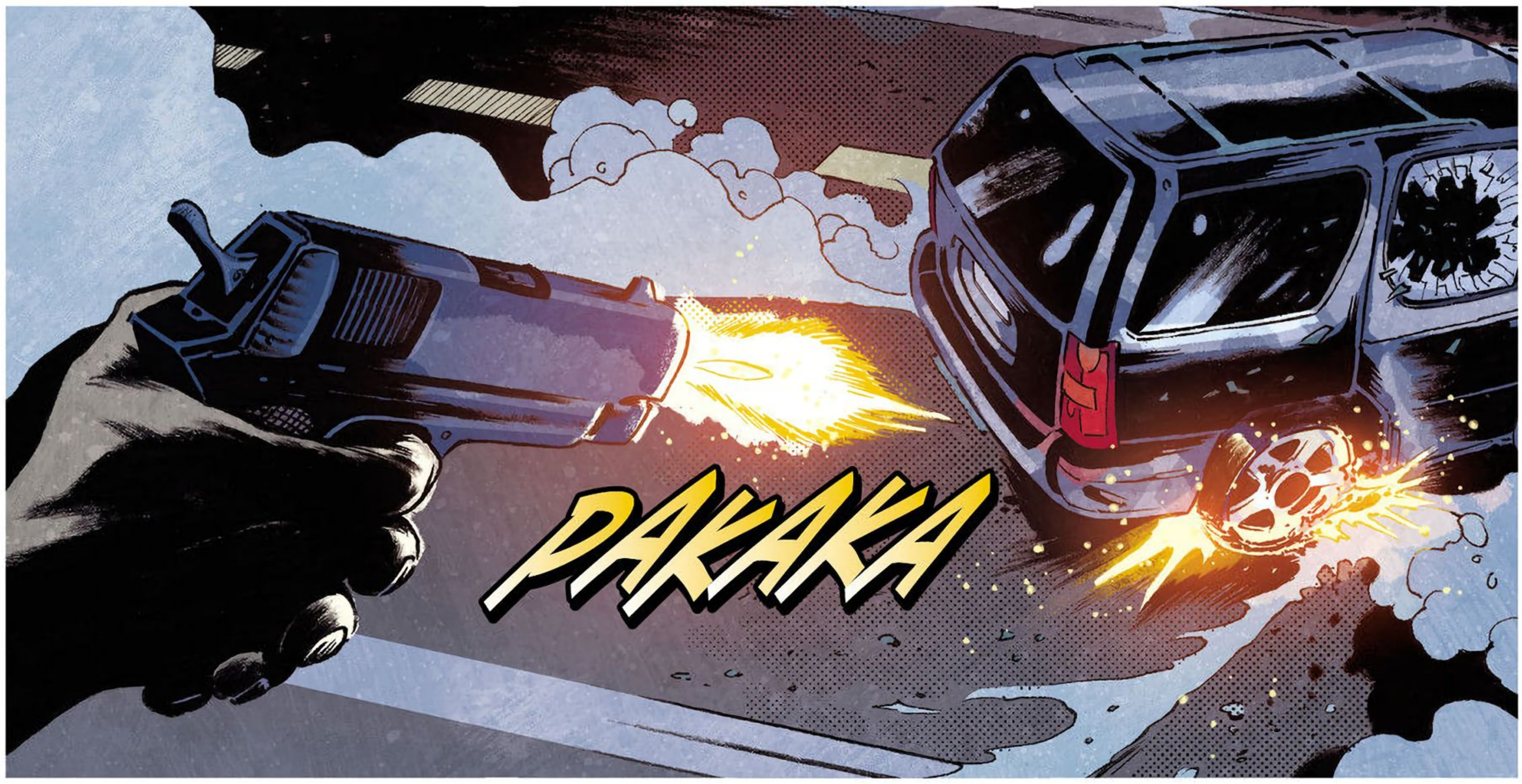
SHARON!

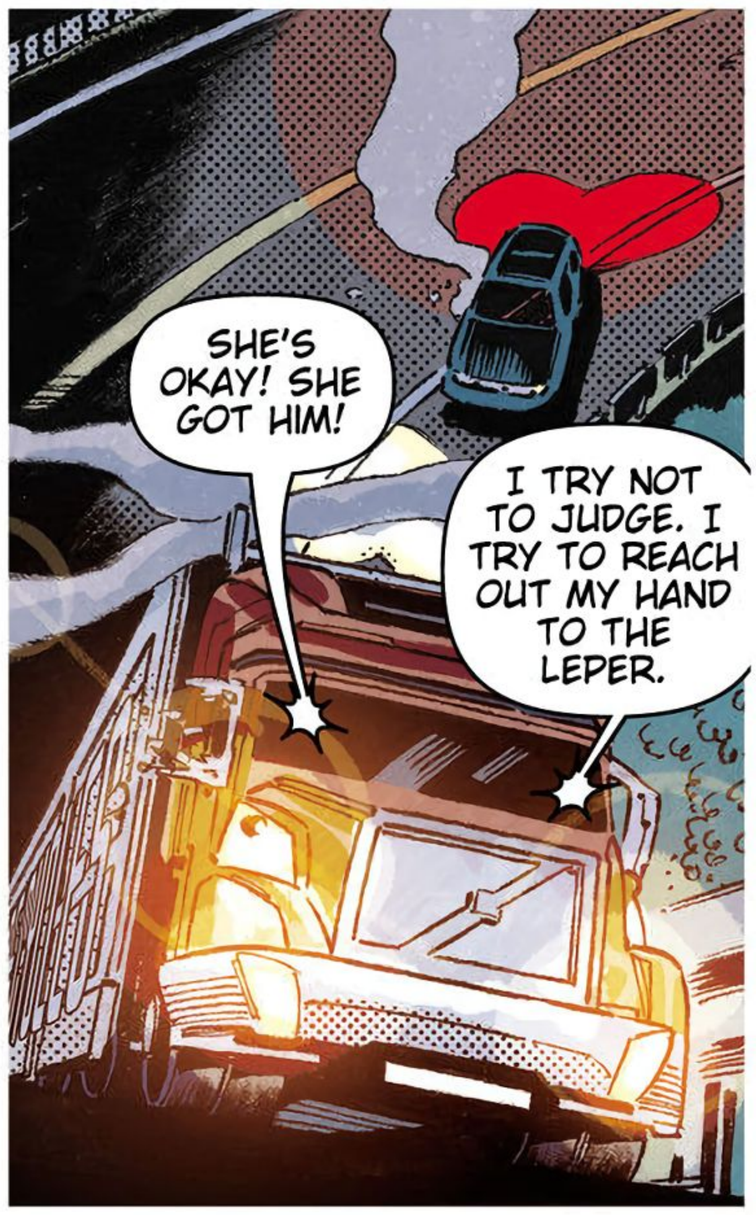




BLAM
BLAM

SCREEE


PAKAKA

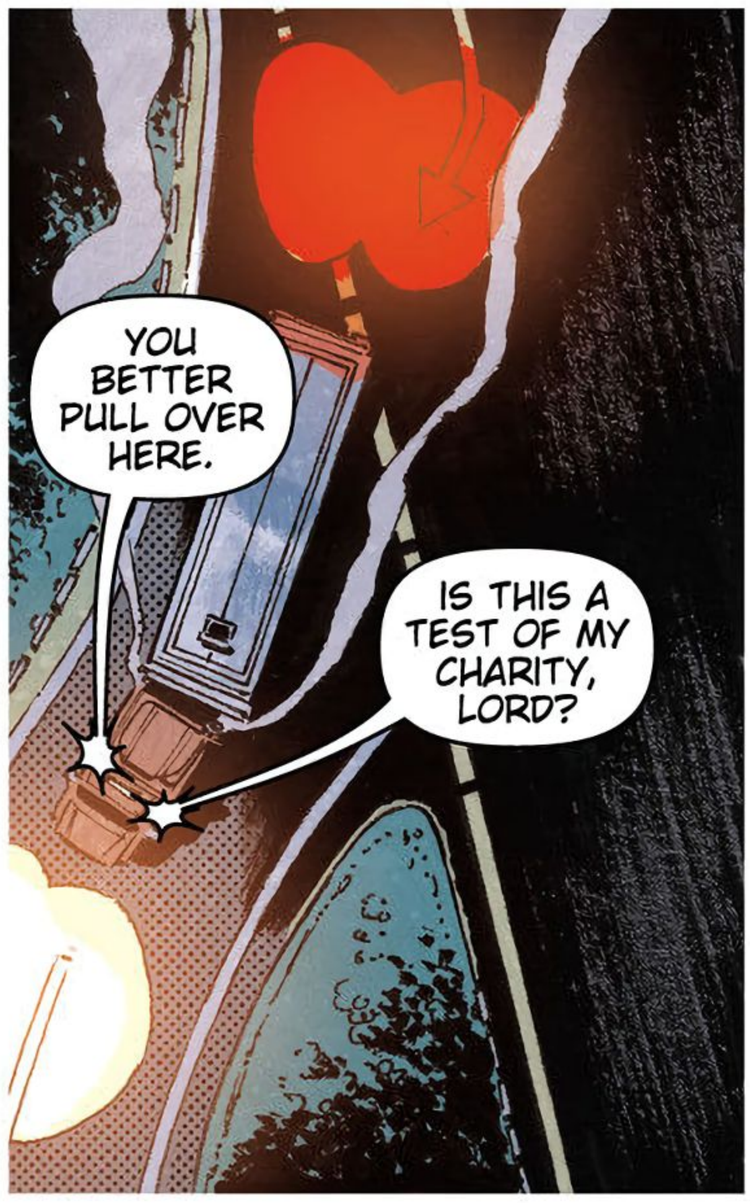

SHE'S OKAY! SHE GOT HIM!
I TRY NOT TO JUDGE. I TRY TO REACH OUT MY HAND TO THE LEPER.

DID YOU HEAR THAT? I TOLD YOU EVERYTHING WAS GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!
A HOT LOAD OF LEPERS. THAT'S WHAT I'M HAULING TONIGHT.

THAT WAS GREAT, RIGHT?
THAT WAS GREAT, HE SAYS. WE GOT SHOT AT AND MY TRUCK IS BEAT TO HELL, AND HE'S SAYING THAT WAS GREAT.

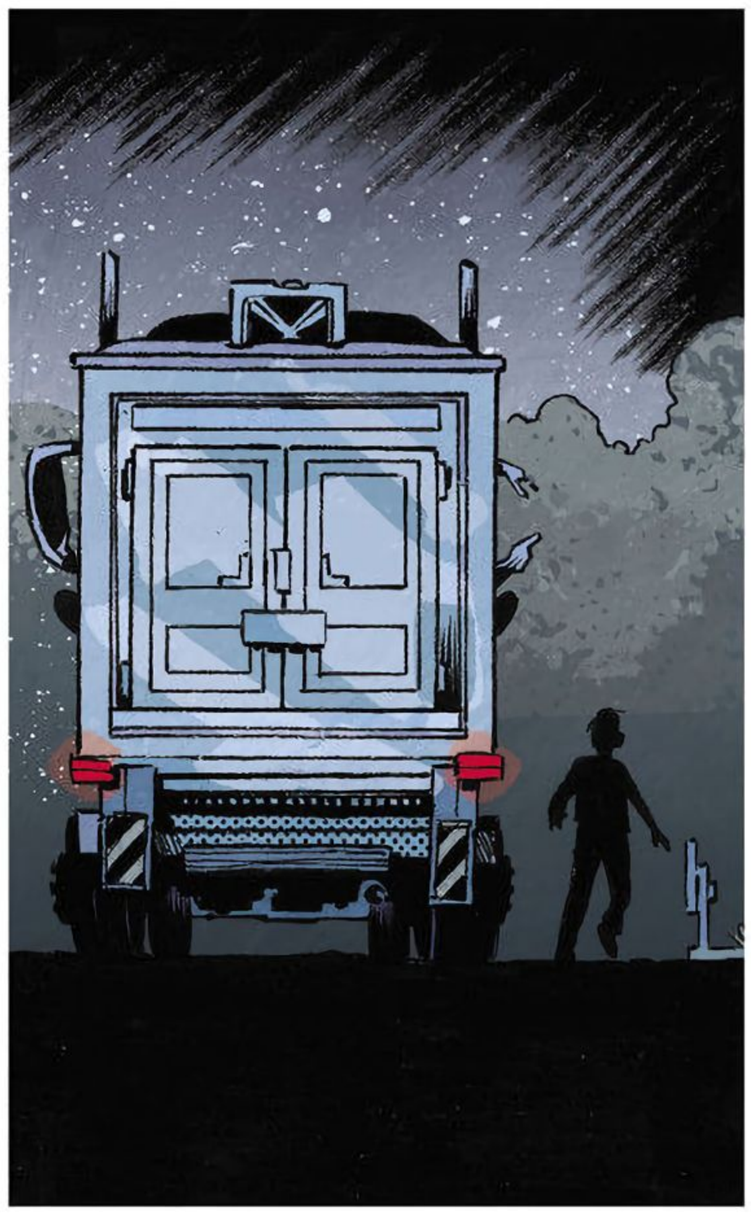
I NEED SOME SALVATION AFTER ALL THIS TORMENT.

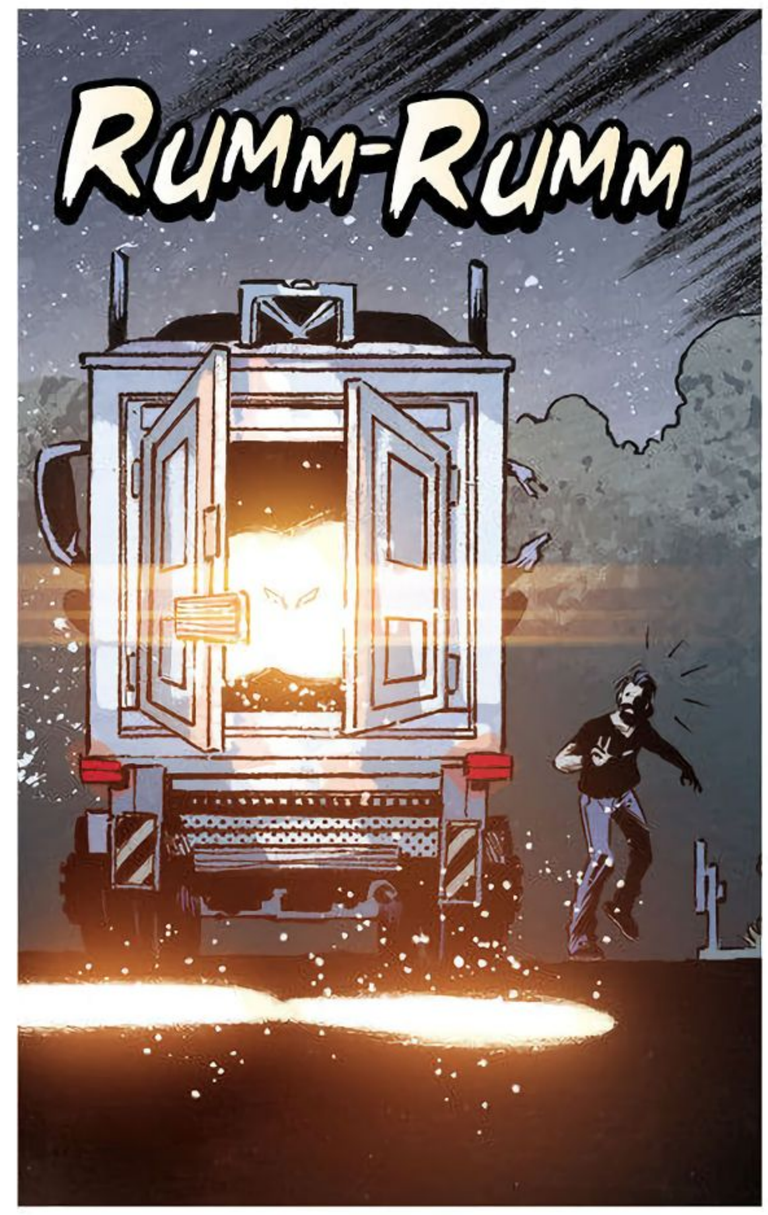
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
RUBBING THE BELLY OF BLACK JESUS IS WHAT I'M DOING.


YOU BETTER PULL OVER HERE.
IS THIS A TEST OF MY CHARITY, LORD?

DO YOU KNOW HOW BAD MY BLOOD PRESSURE IS? JUST AS SKY-HIGH AS MY DEDUCTIBLE ON THIS RIG.
SHARON?

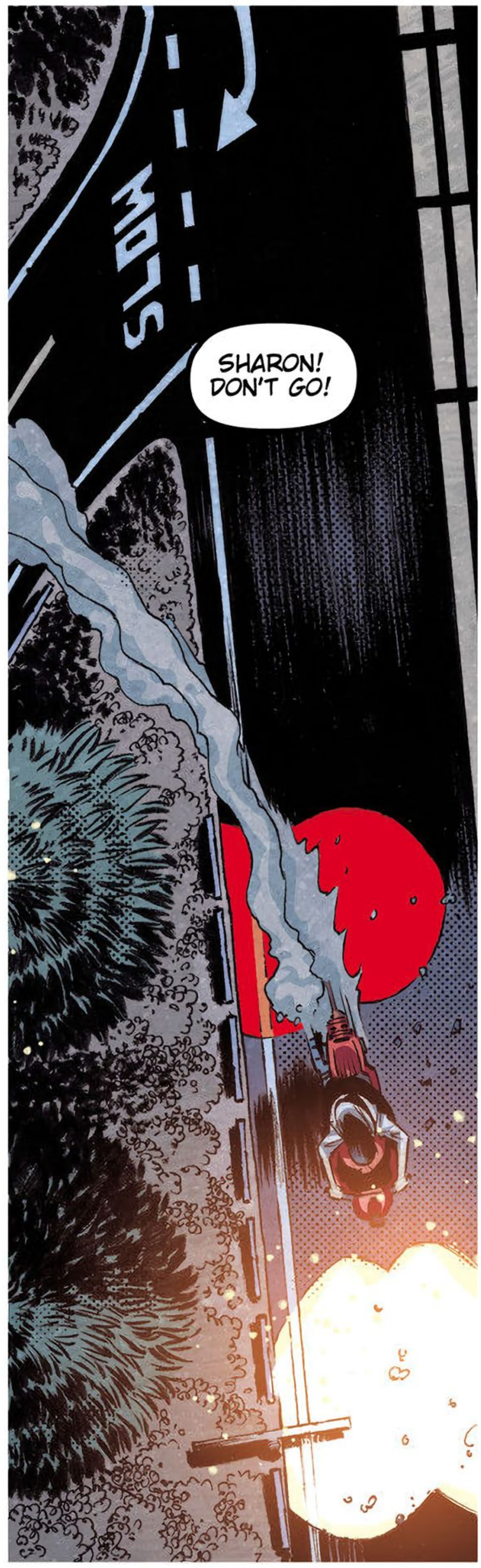
SHARON, YOU UP THERE?



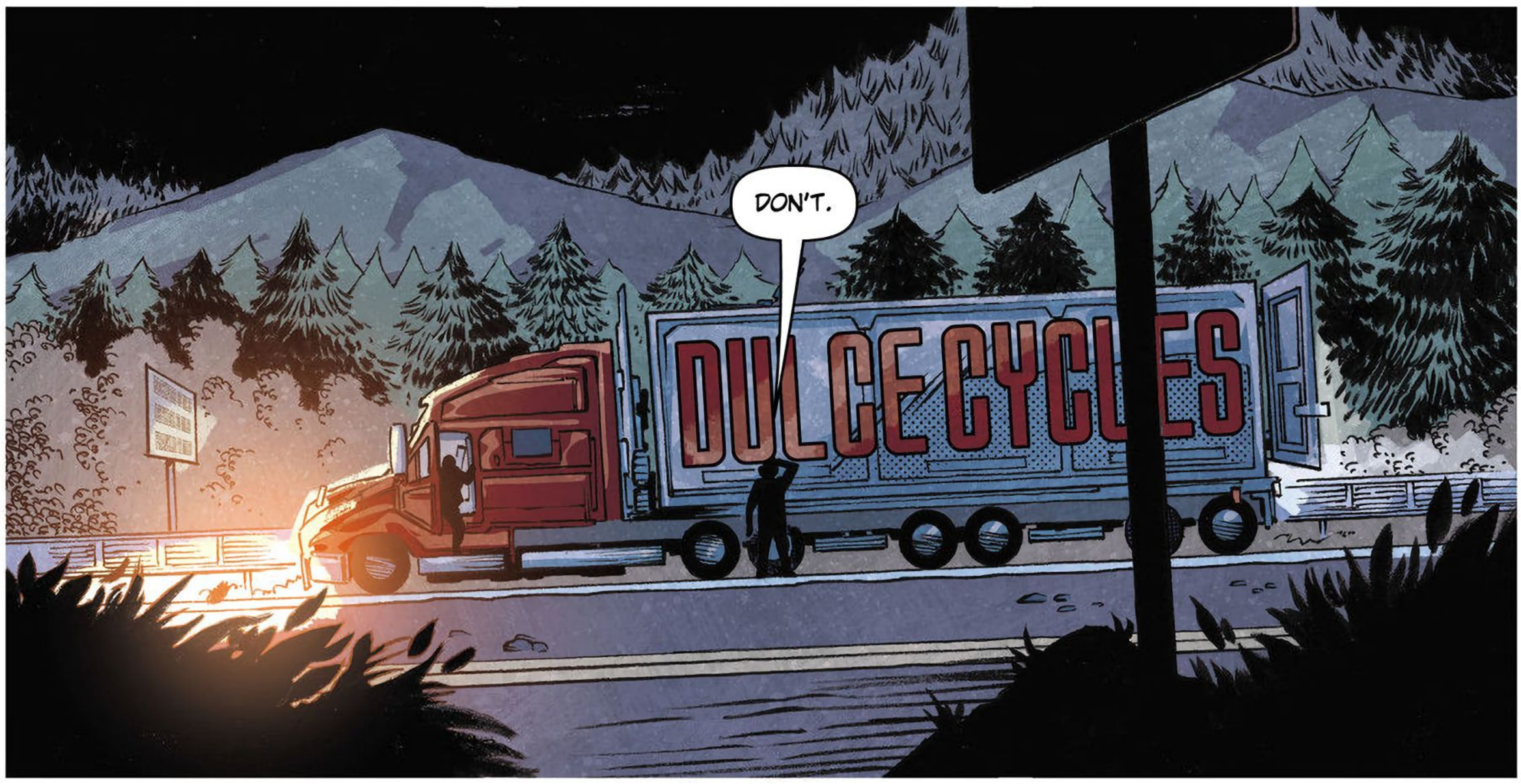

RUMM-RUMM

RUMMMM

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
ROCKF
OSHKO
FRANK
SCREEEE


SLOW
SHARON! DON'T GO!

DON'T LEAVE US.


DON'T.
DULCE CYCLES

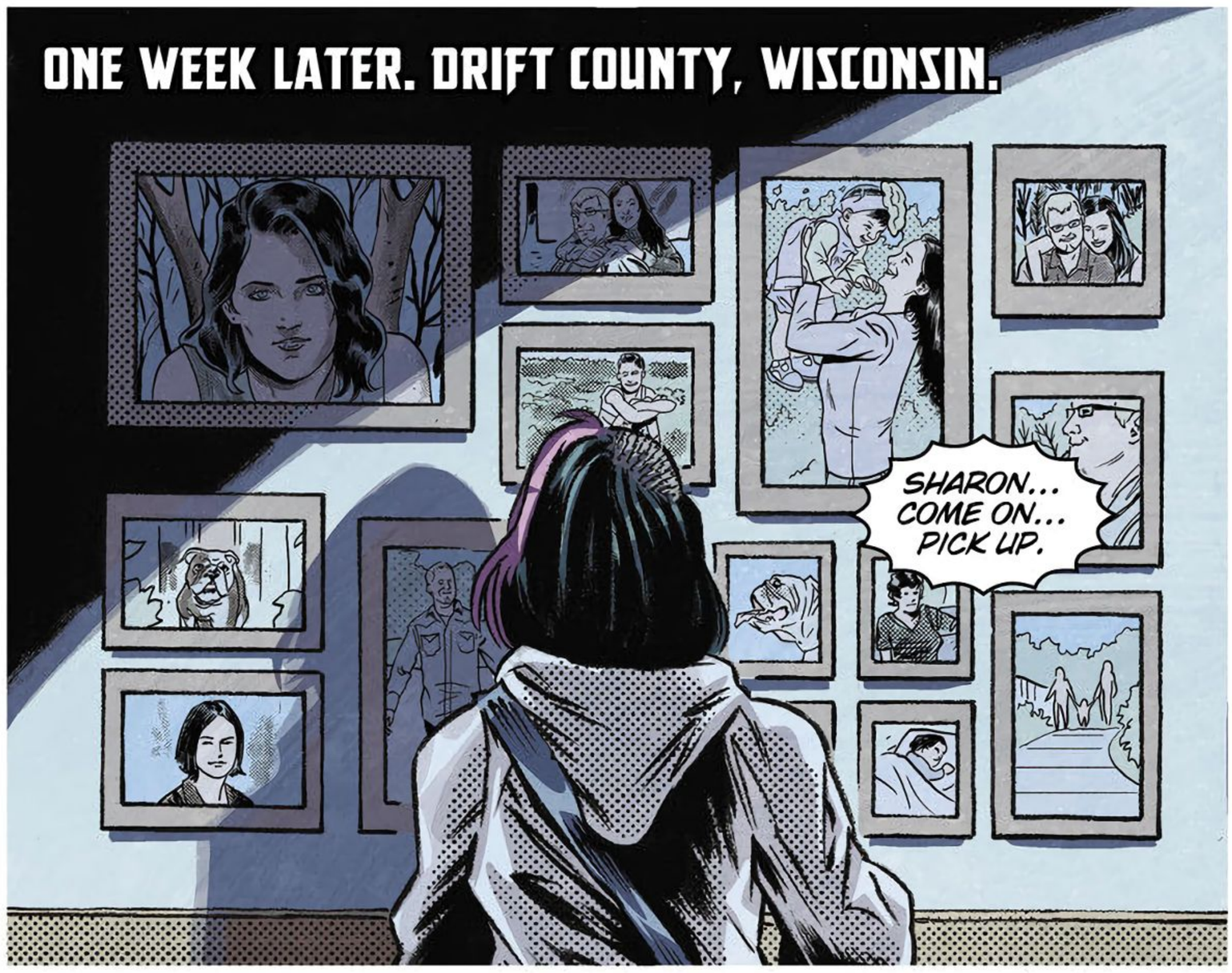
SHOULD I KEEP GOING?
NO. I DON'T THINK SO.

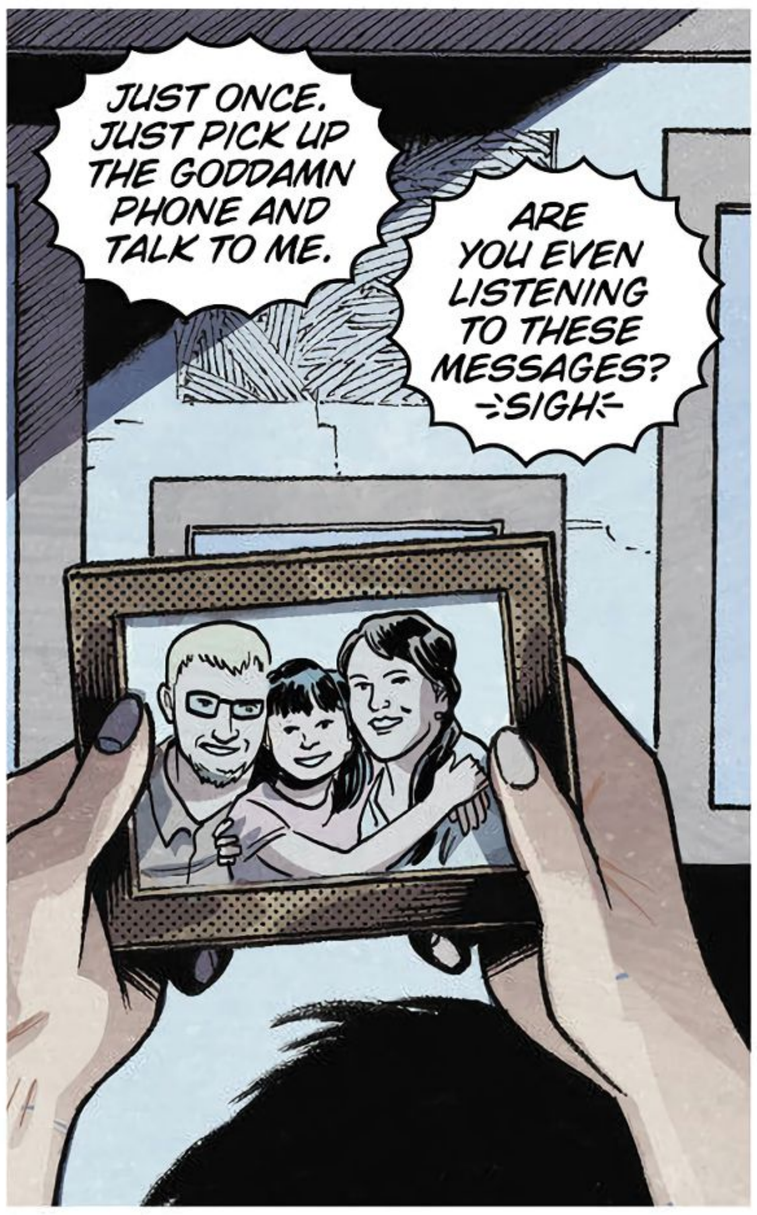
NORTHERN MINNESOTA ISN'T L.A. OR NEW YORK.
IF ANYTHING MORE HAPPENS TONIGHT, THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE WE'LL ATTRACT MEDIA ATTENTION. WE DON'T NEED ANYONE ELSE SNIFFING AFTER US.

LET'S CHANGE COURSE.
YOU HAVE THE PHOTOS OF THEM LEAVING THE SHERIFF'S RESIDENCE?
I DO.

UPLOAD THEM TO THE CHAT ROOM.
THEN I'LL DISCUSS OUR NEXT MOVE WITH THE WEBMASTER.

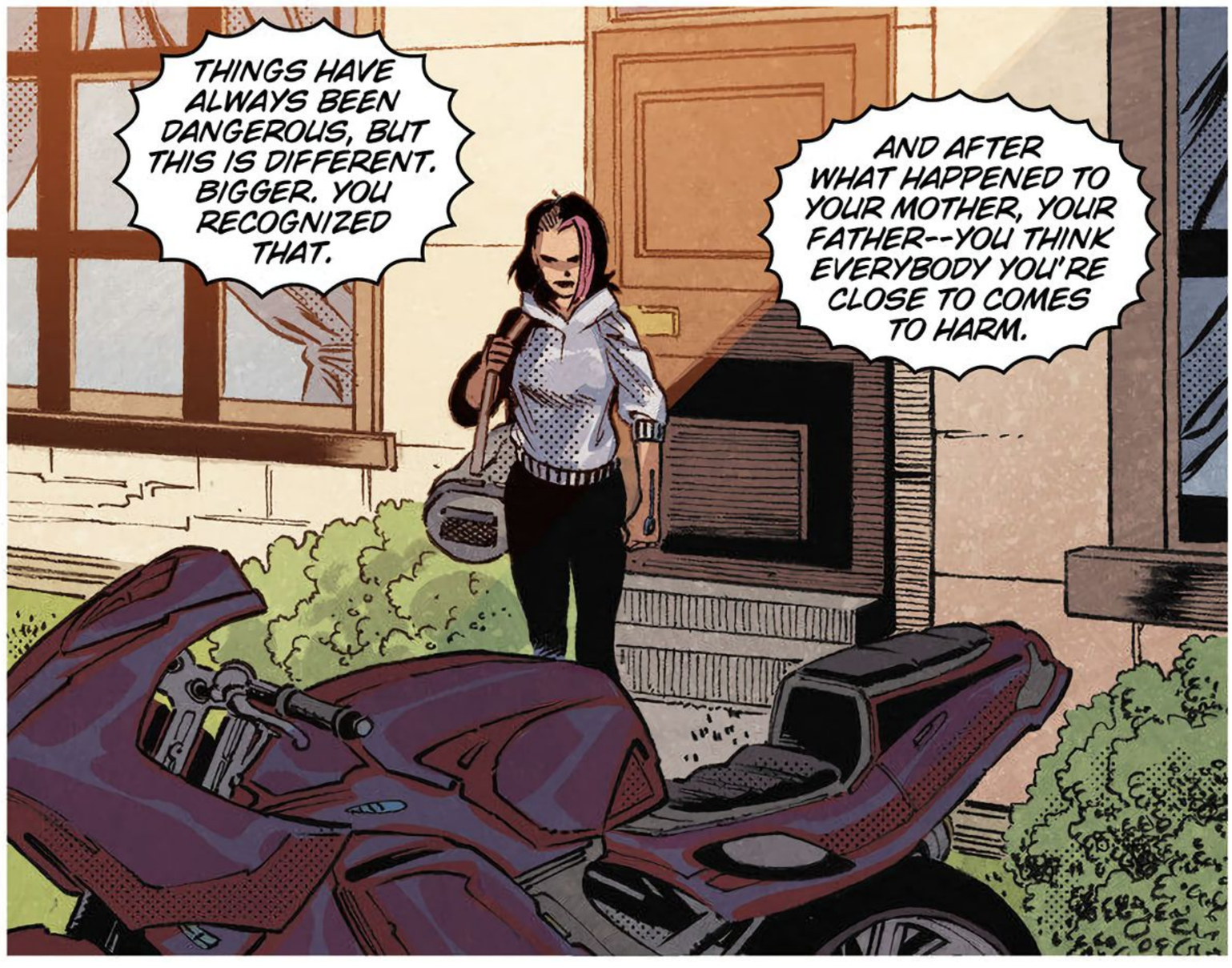
WHATEVER YOU DECIDE UPON, KEEP THE CALENDAR IN MIND.
THE FALL EQUINOX IS ALMOST HERE.

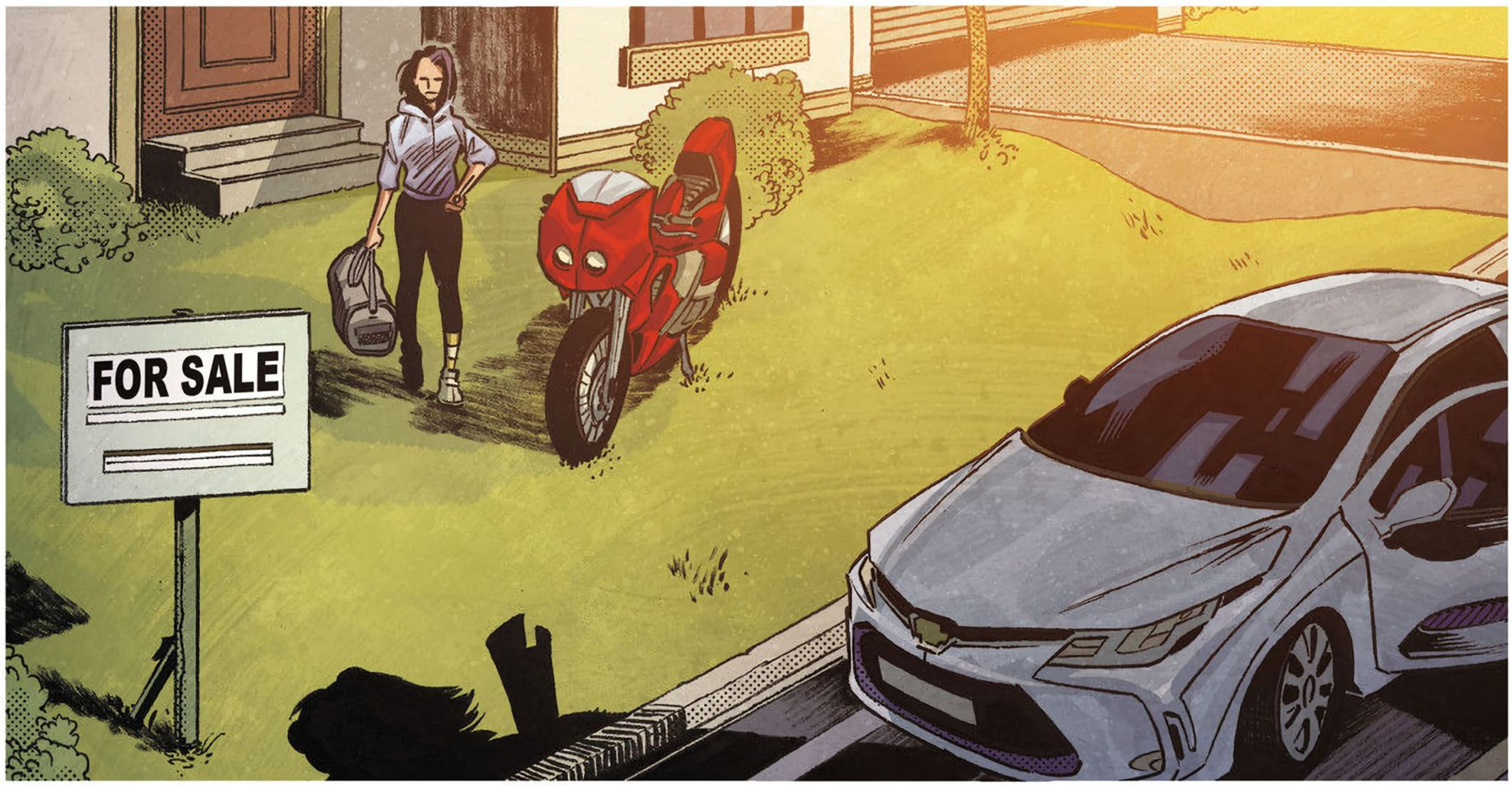

ONE WEEK LATER. DRIFT COUNTY, WISCONSIN.
SHARON... COME ON... PICK UP.


JUST ONCE. JUST PICK UP THE GODDAMN PHONE AND TALK TO ME.
ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO THESE MESSAGES? -SIGH-

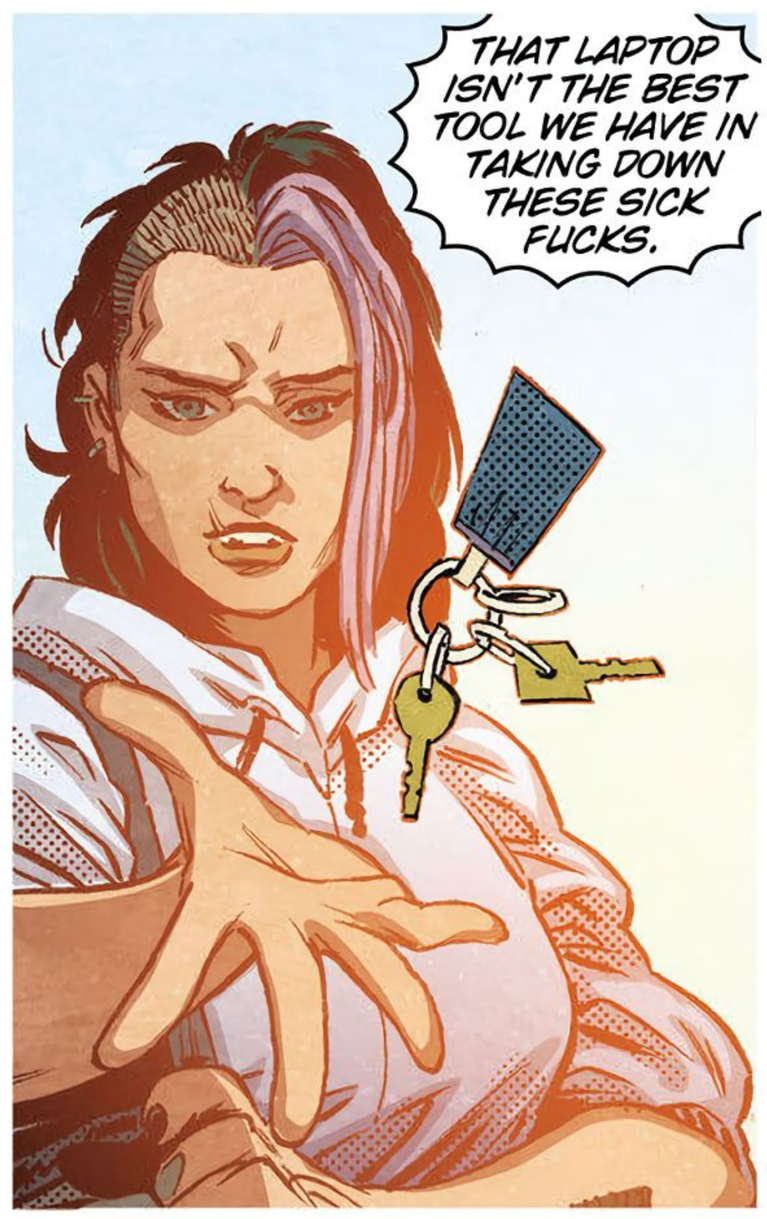
LOOK...EARLIER... WHEN YOU SAID YOUR LAPTOP WAS THE ONLY THING IN YOUR LIFE THAT MATTERS...
I KNOW YOU WERE LYING.

I CAN FEEL THINGS, SHARON. EVEN IF YOU CAN'T SAY IT YOURSELF, I KNOW WHAT'S GOING THROUGH YOUR HEAD.
THAT'S WHY YOU LEFT. YOU LEFT BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T WANT US TO GET HURT.


THINGS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN DANGEROUS, BUT THIS IS DIFFERENT. BIGGER. YOU RECOGNIZED THAT.
AND AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR MOTHER, YOUR FATHER--YOU THINK EVERYBODY YOU'RE CLOSE TO COMES TO HARM.


FOR SALE

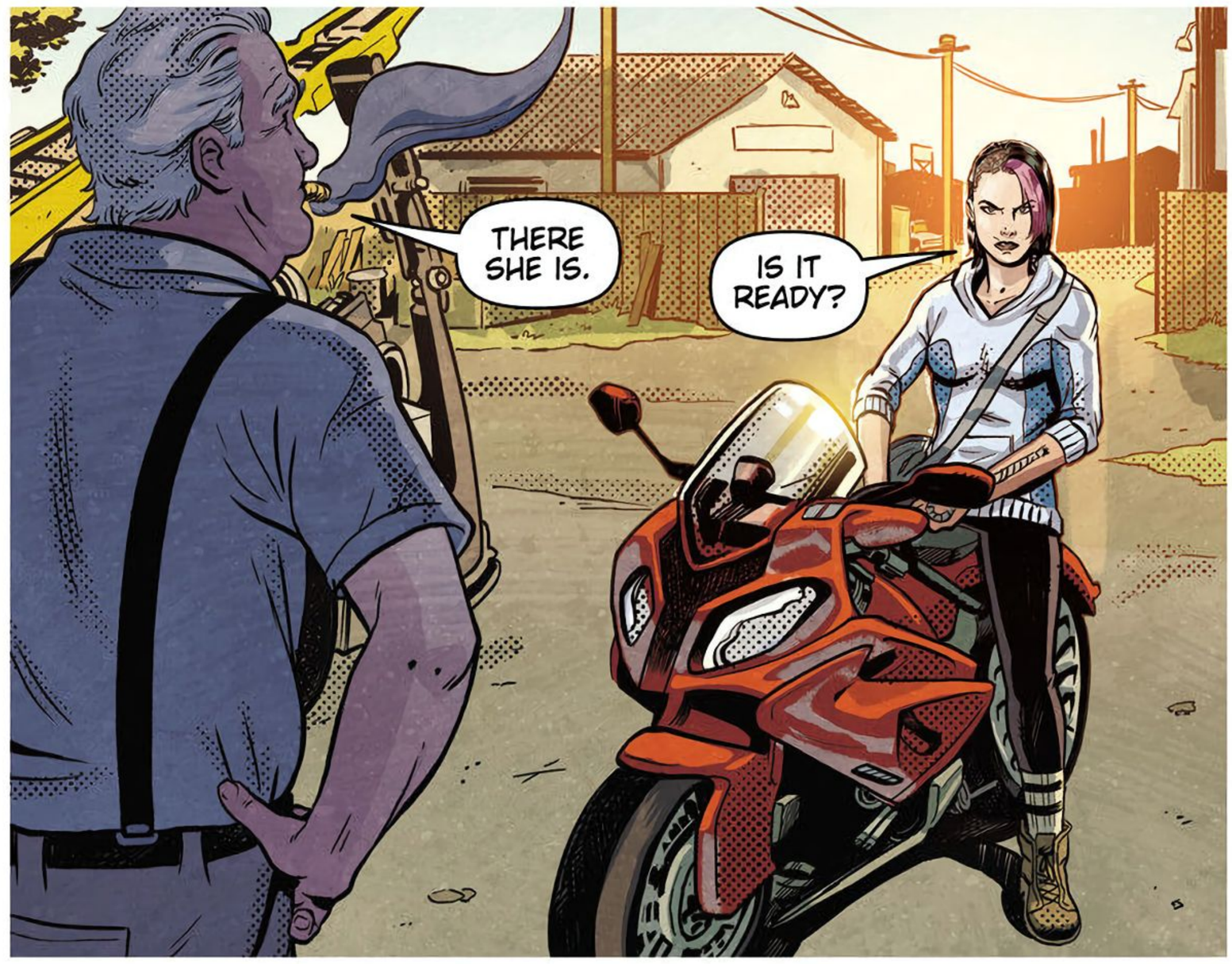
SO YOU'RE GOING TO PUSH AWAY EVERYBODY WHO CARES ABOUT YOU? THAT'S A SHITTY WAY TO LIVE.
SOLD
YOU'RE TRYING TO BE STRONG, BUT YOU'RE ACTUALLY BEING WEAK. BECAUSE IT'S BRAVE TO BE VULNERABLE AROUND OTHER PEOPLE.

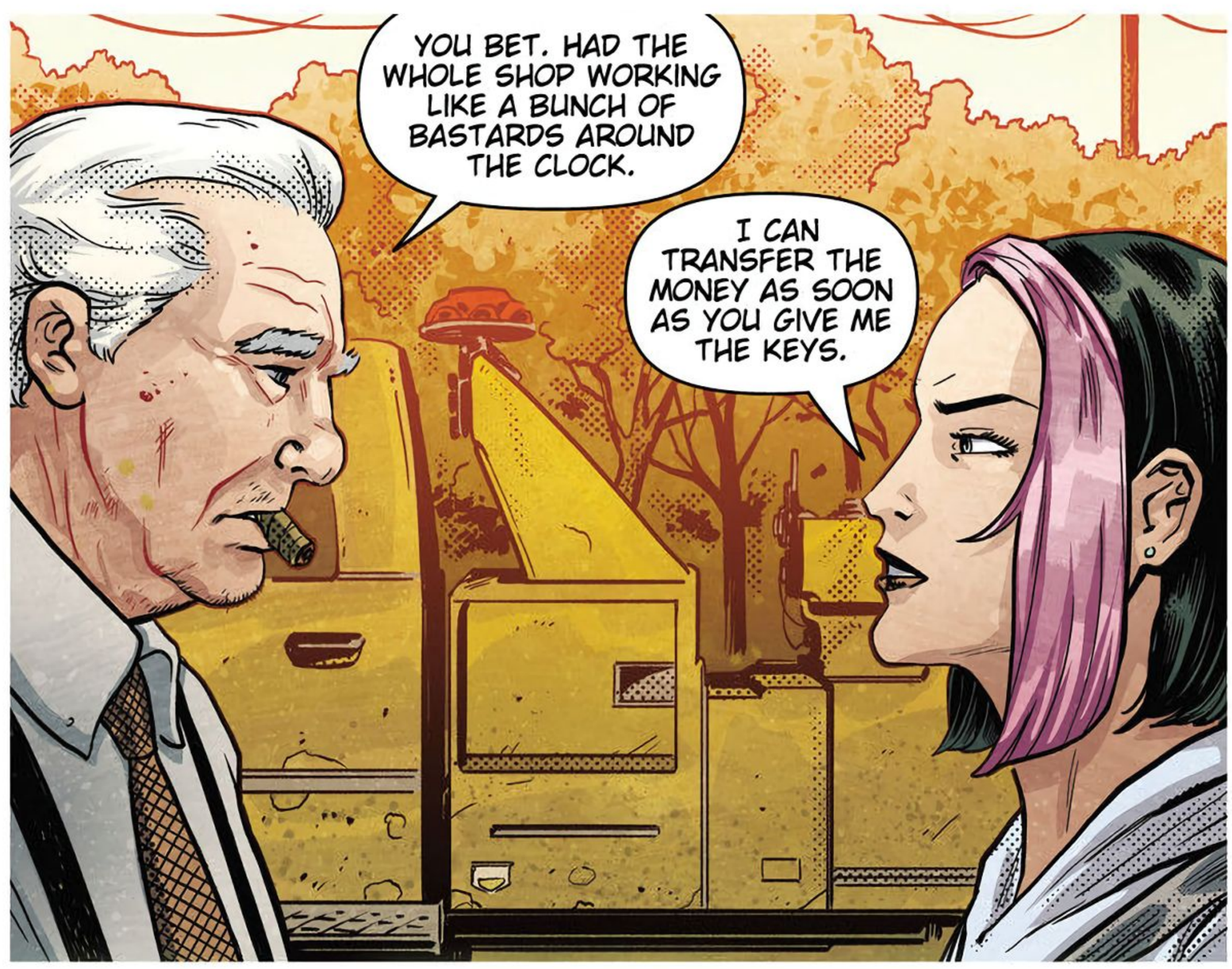

THAT LAPTOP ISN'T THE BEST TOOL WE HAVE IN TAKING DOWN THESE SICK FUCKS.

WE ARE.

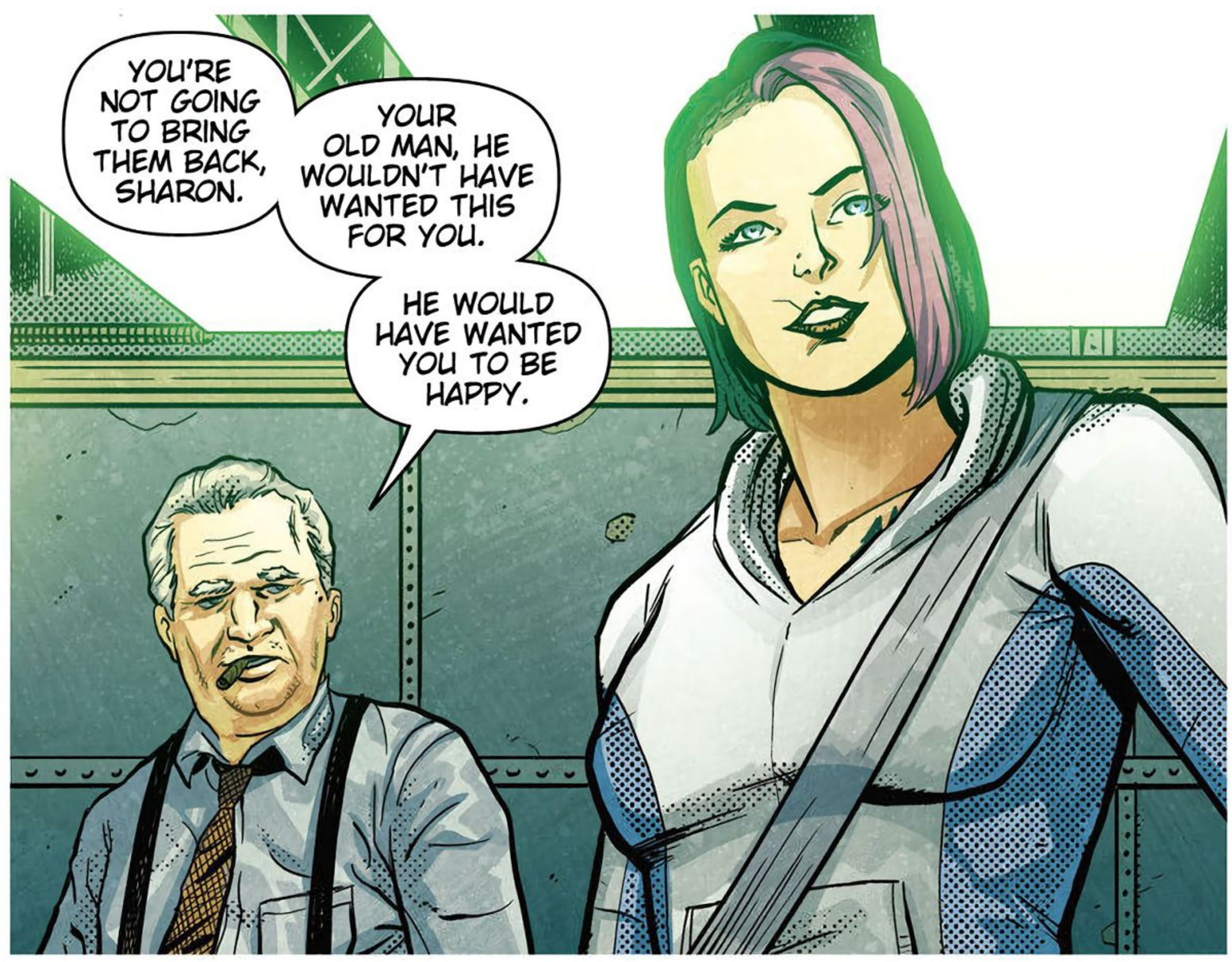
CALL ME BACK, SHARON.

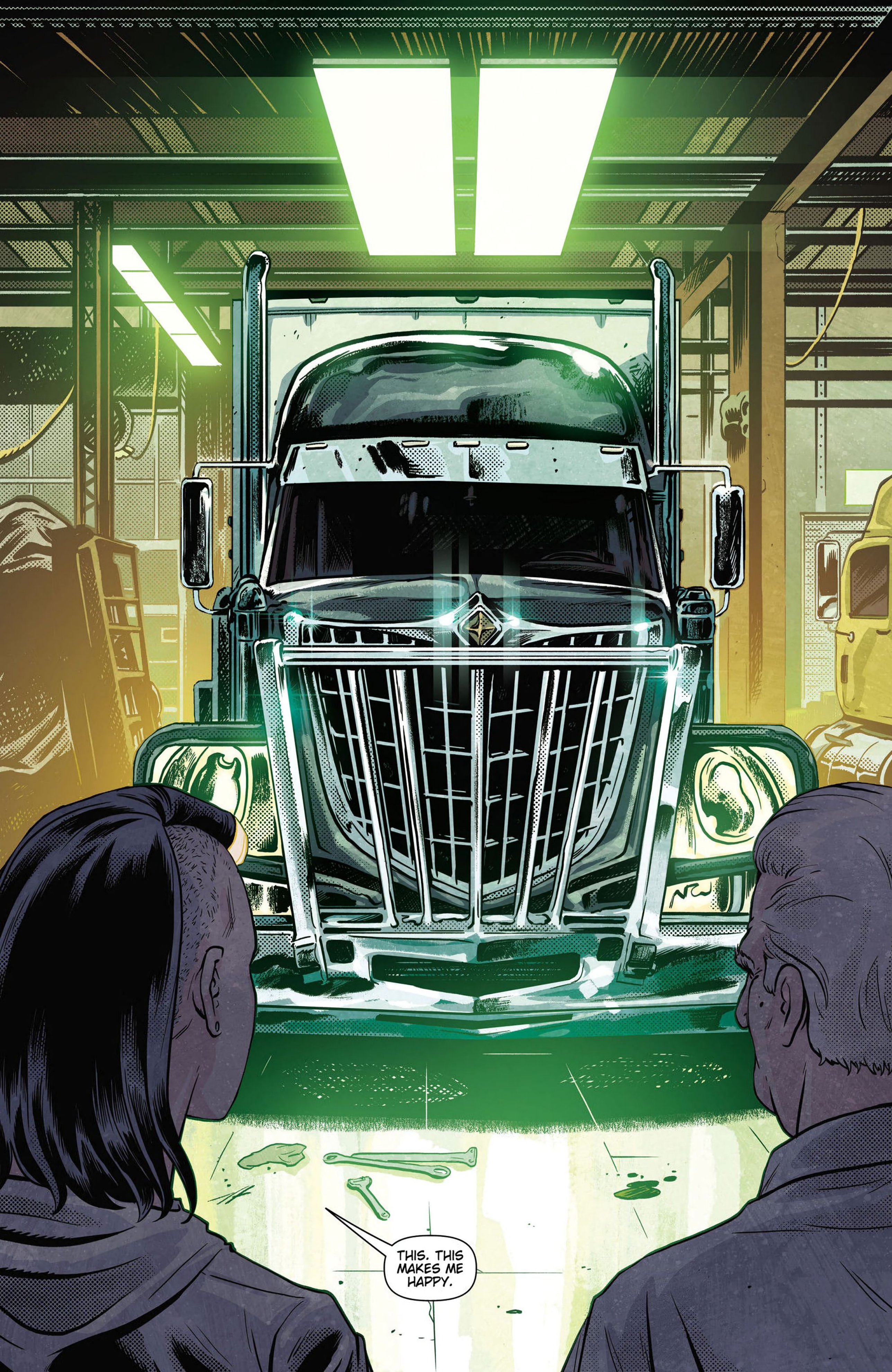
UDELH
TRUCKIN
CALL ME BACK AND TELL ME WHAT THE PLAN IS, BECAUSE I'M PART OF IT, WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT.

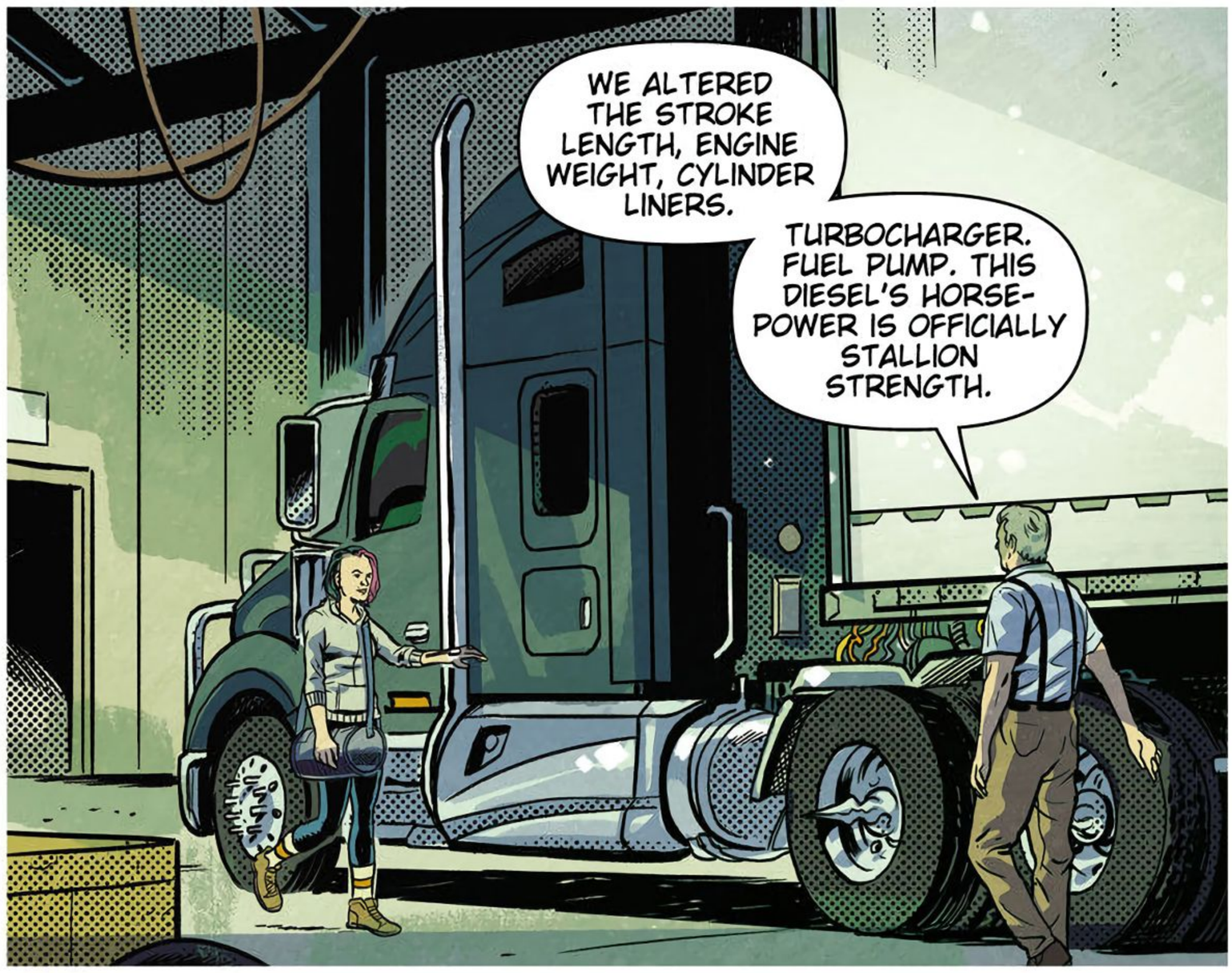

THERE SHE IS.
IS IT READY?


YOU BET. HAD THE WHOLE SHOP WORKING LIKE A BUNCH OF BASTARDS AROUND THE CLOCK.
I CAN TRANSFER THE MONEY AS SOON AS YOU GIVE ME THE KEYS.

NOT SURE WHY YOU'RE IN SUCH A RUSH.
BUT I AM PRETTY SURE WHAT YOU'RE UP TO.


YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BRING THEM BACK, SHARON.
YOUR OLD MAN, HE WOULDN'T HAVE WANTED THIS FOR YOU.
HE WOULD HAVE WANTED YOU TO BE HAPPY.


THIS. THIS MAKES ME HAPPY.

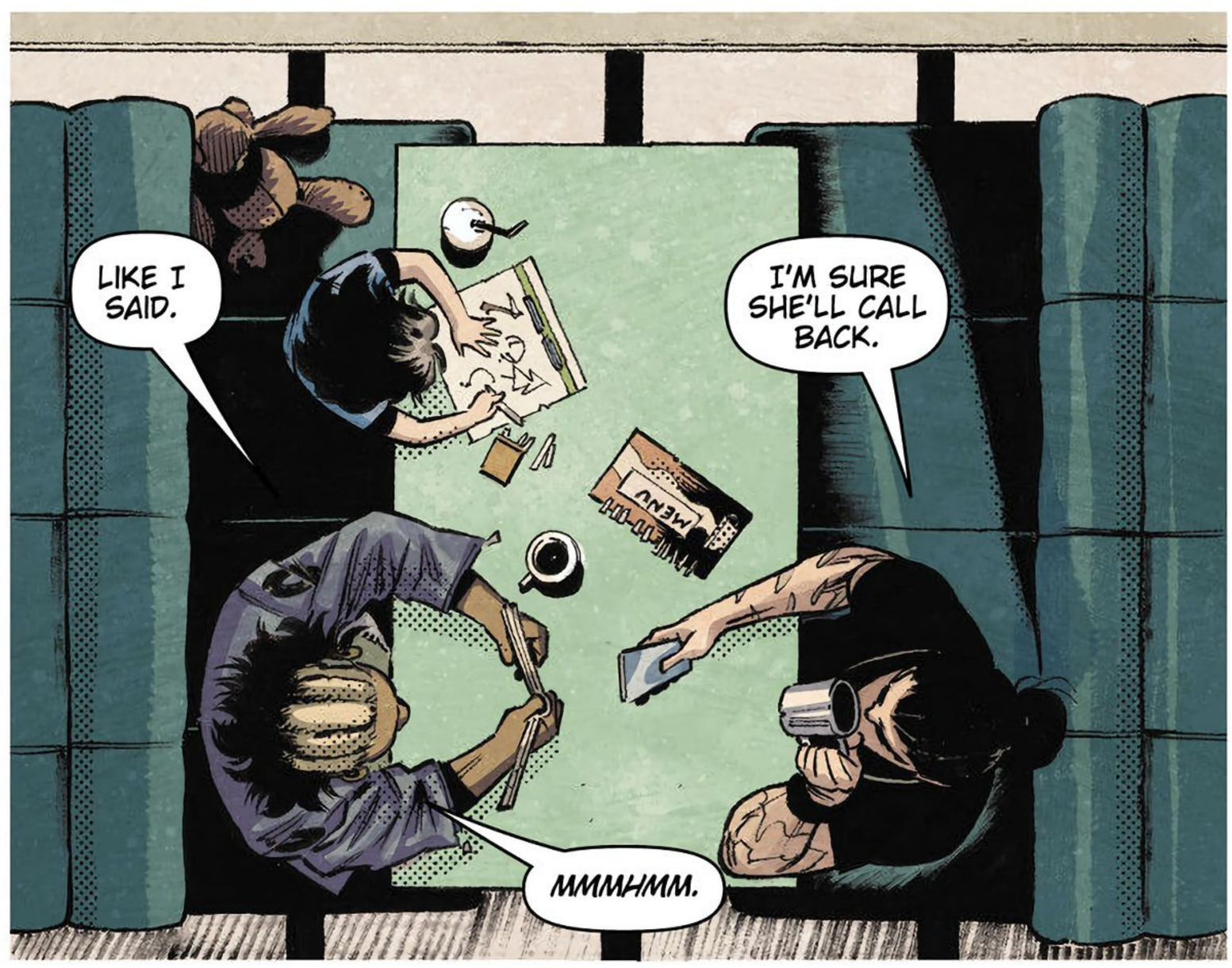


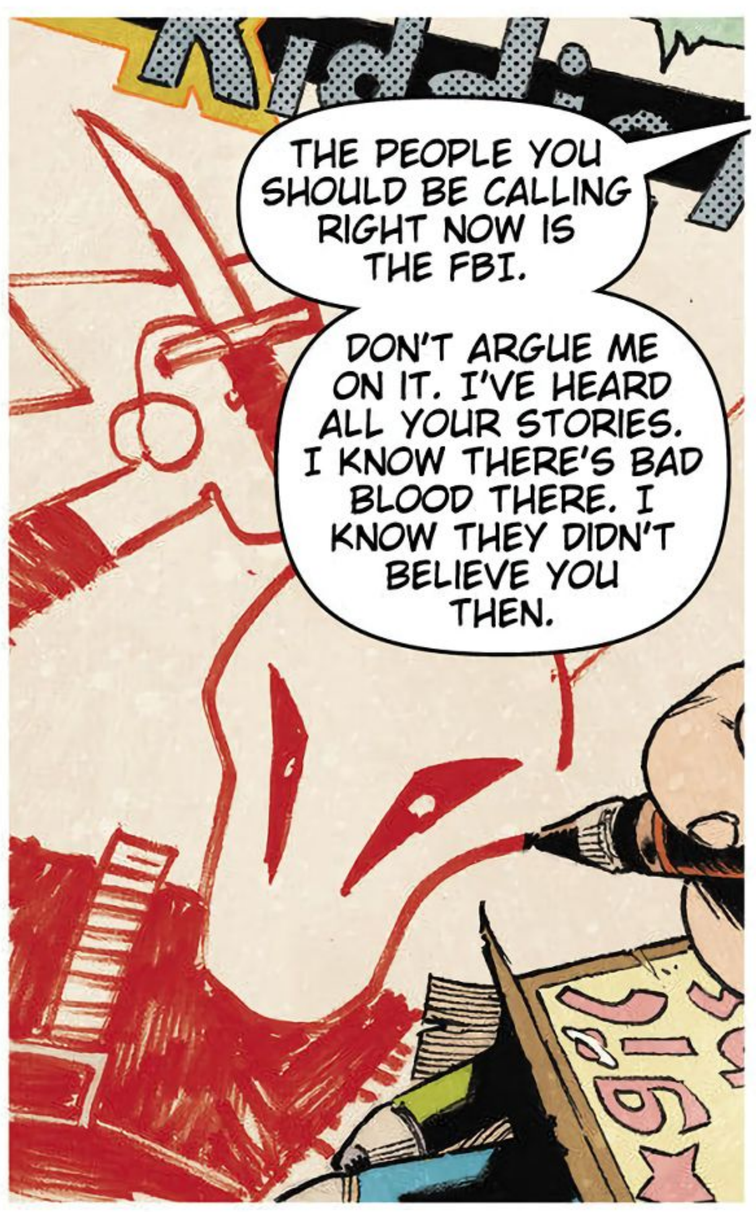
YEP. I'D SAY YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A WAR MACHINE.

'dinin'
FINE dinin'
SALE
WILL YOU PUT DOWN THE DAMN PHONE?

SHE'S NOT GOING TO PICK UP.
SHE WILL. I KNOW SHE WILL. REMEMBER HOW I TOLD YOU I CAN SENSE THINGS. SHE'S GOING TO--

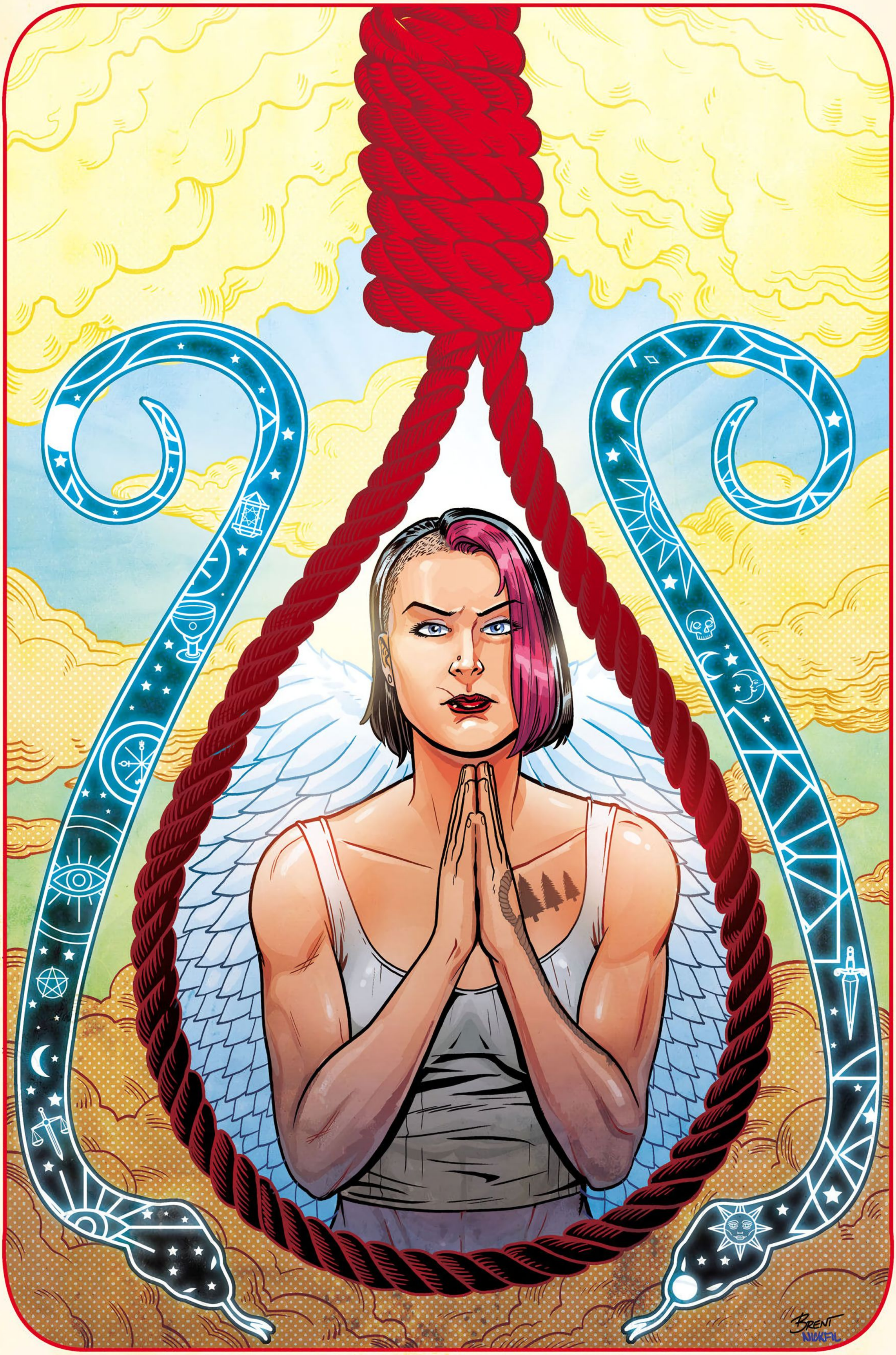
VOICEMAIL FULL
Sharon
CALL FAILED
VOICE MAIL FULL

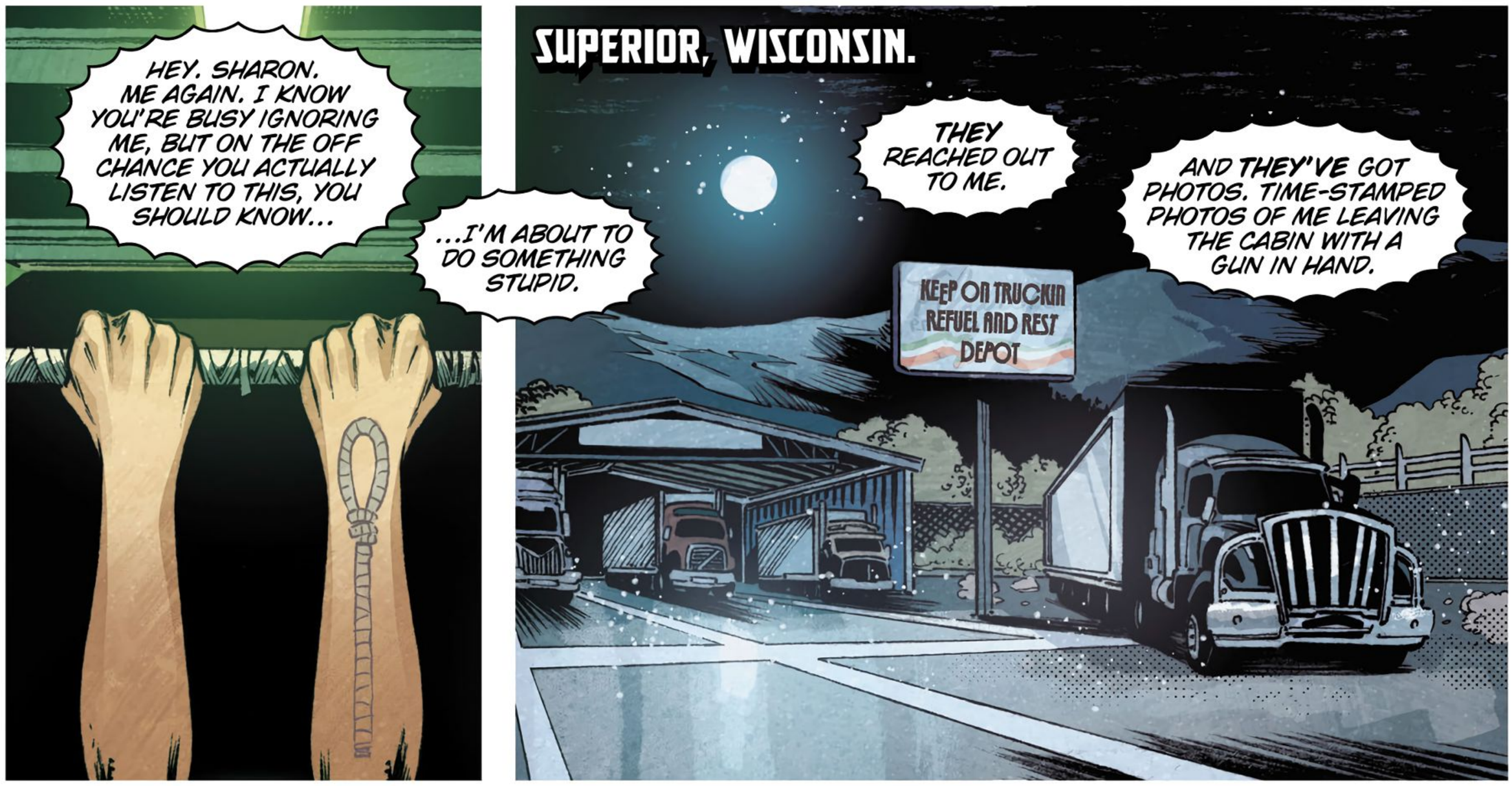

LIKE I SAID.
I'M SURE SHE'LL CALL BACK.
MENU
MMMHMM.

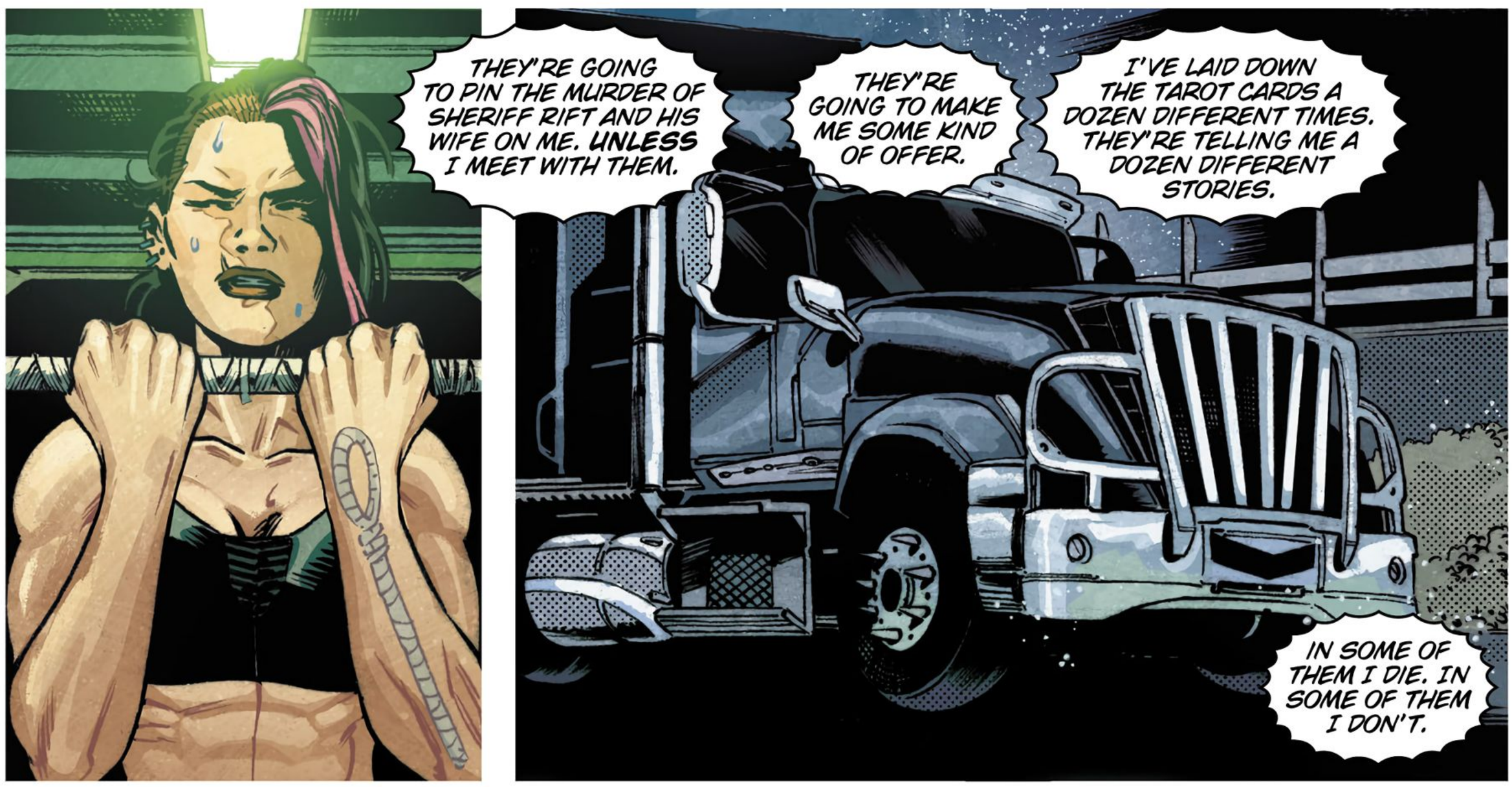

THE PEOPLE YOU SHOULD BE CALLING RIGHT NOW IS THE FBI.
DON'T ARGUE ME ON IT. I'VE HEARD ALL YOUR STORIES. I KNOW THERE'S BAD BLOOD THERE. I KNOW THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE YOU THEN.

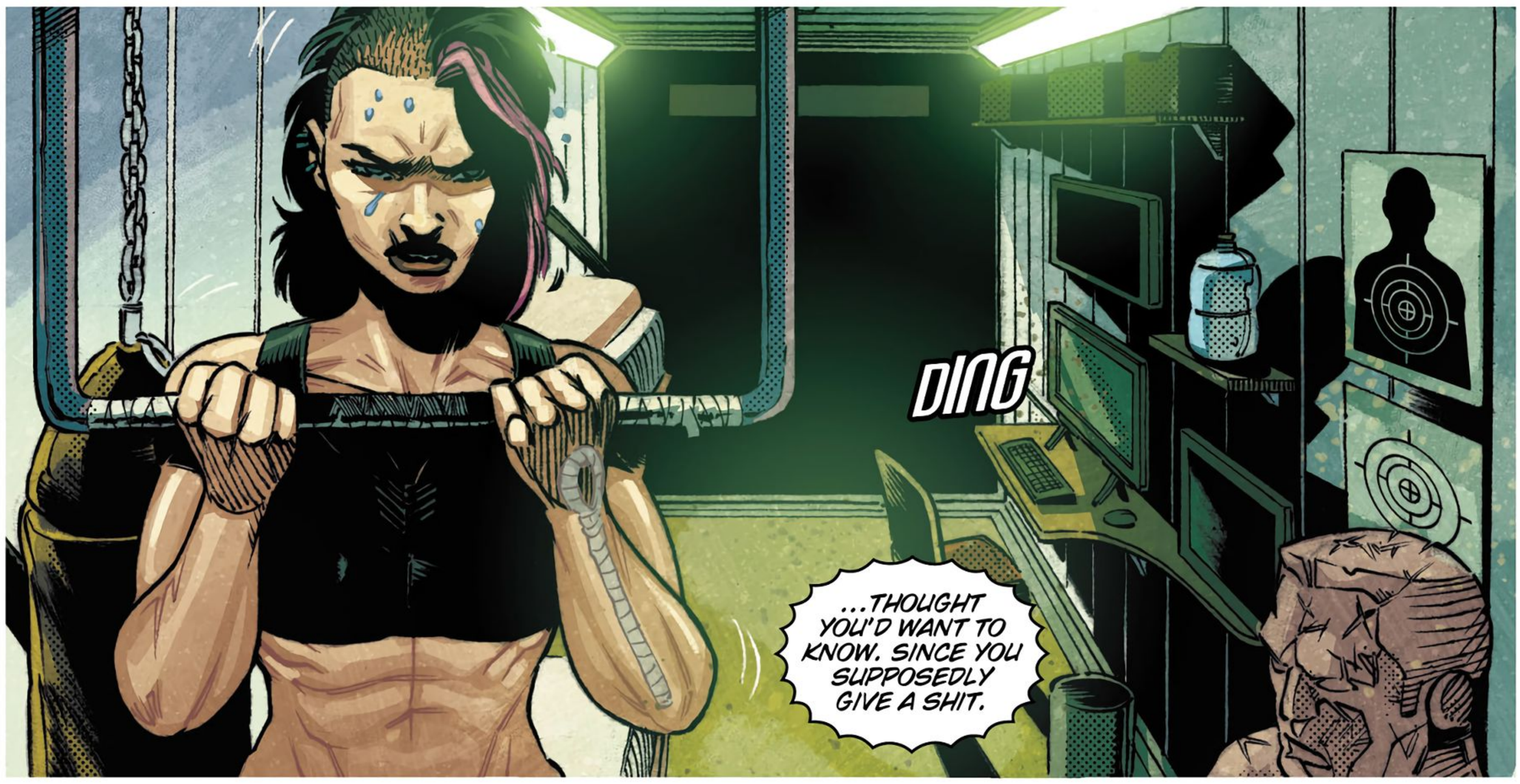
BUT YOU SAID IT YOURSELF-- YOU WERE OUT OF CONTROL BACK THEN.
YOU'VE CHANGED FOR THE BETTER, BUT CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE CHANGED FOR THE WORSE. YOU NEED TO--
DZZT

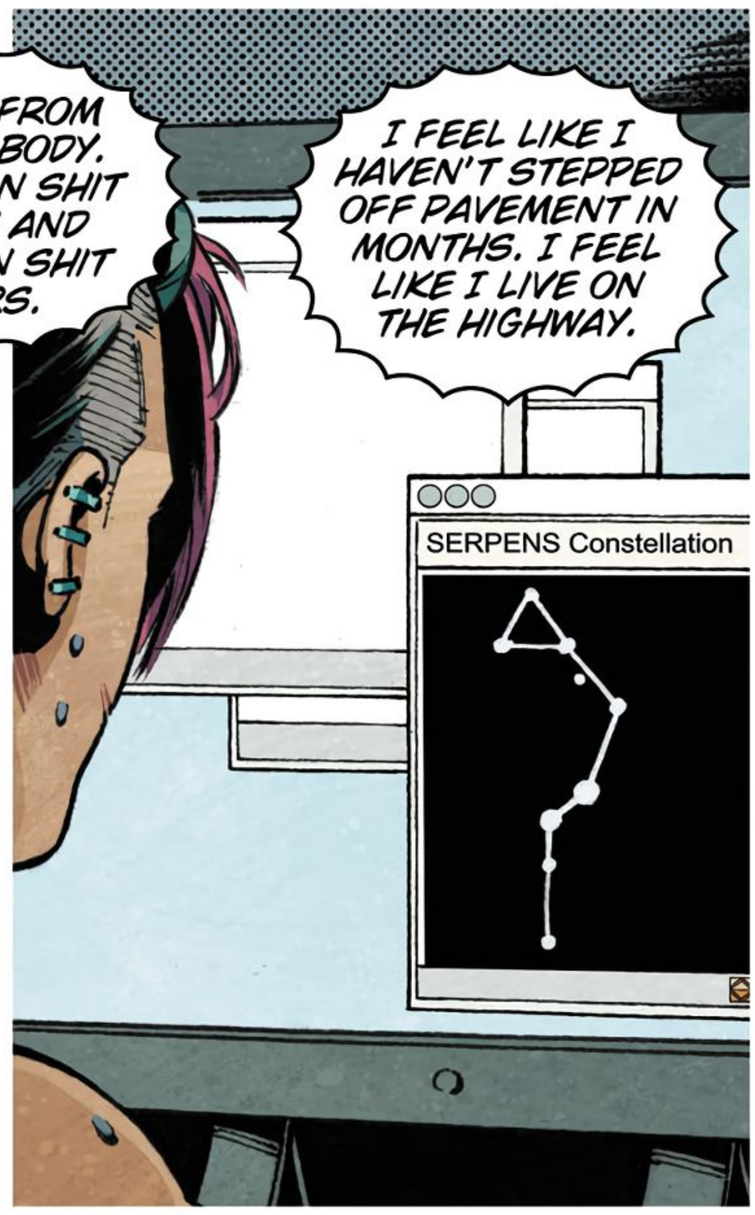
MAYBE IT'S HER. MAYBE IT'S--

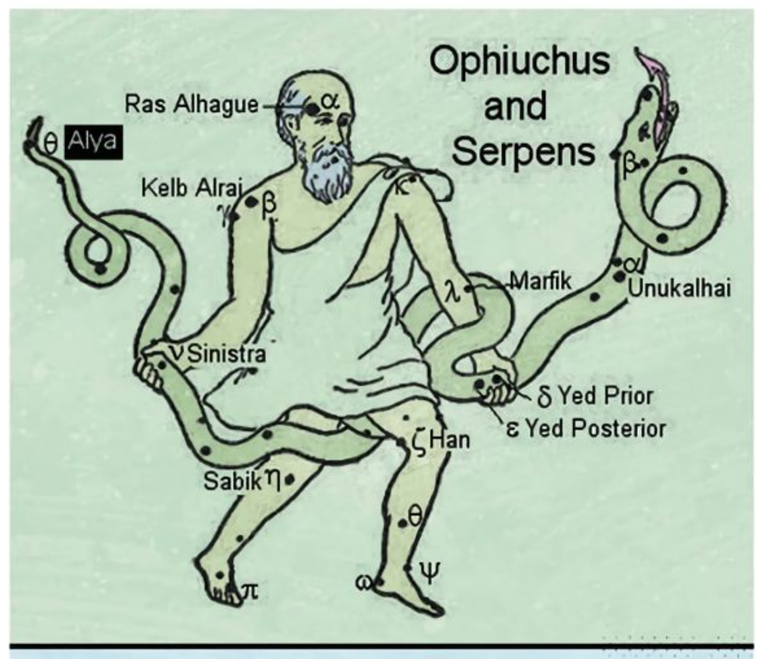

BRENT
NICKFIL


HEY. SHARON. ME AGAIN. I KNOW YOU'RE BUSY IGNORING ME, BUT ON THE OFF CHANCE YOU ACTUALLY LISTEN TO THIS, YOU SHOULD KNOW...
...I'M ABOUT TO DO SOMETHING STUPID.
SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN.
THEY REACHED OUT TO ME.
AND THEY'VE GOT PHOTOS. TIME-STAMPED PHOTOS OF ME LEAVING THE CABIN WITH A GUN IN HAND.
KEEP ON TRUCKIN REFUEL AND REST DEPOT


THEY'RE GOING TO PIN THE MURDER OF SHERIFF RIFT AND HIS WIFE ON ME. UNLESS I MEET WITH THEM.
THEY'RE GOING TO MAKE ME SOME KIND OF OFFER.
I'VE LAID DOWN THE TAROT CARDS A DOZEN DIFFERENT TIMES. THEY'RE TELLING ME A DOZEN DIFFERENT STORIES.
IN SOME OF THEM I DIE. IN SOME OF THEM I DON'T.

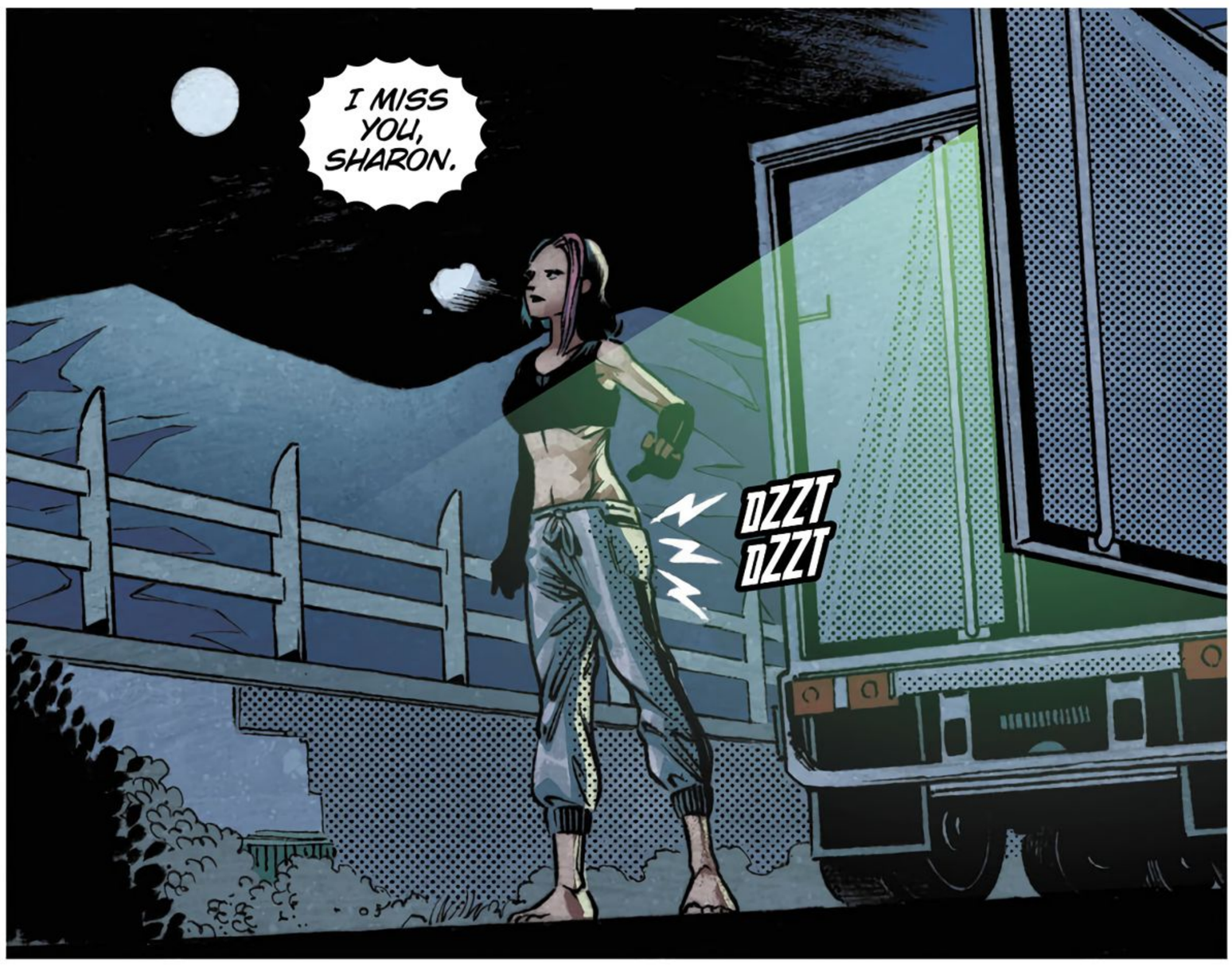

DING
...THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO KNOW. SINCE YOU SUPPOSEDLY GIVE A SHIT.





Serpens (Latin: Serpent) constellation.

According to the Greek myth, the giant snake is gripped by the healer Asclepius, who holds the top half of the snake in his left hand and the tail in his right hand. The serpents taught him the secret of immortality. But the god Zeus killed him to prevent him from sharing this power with mortals.

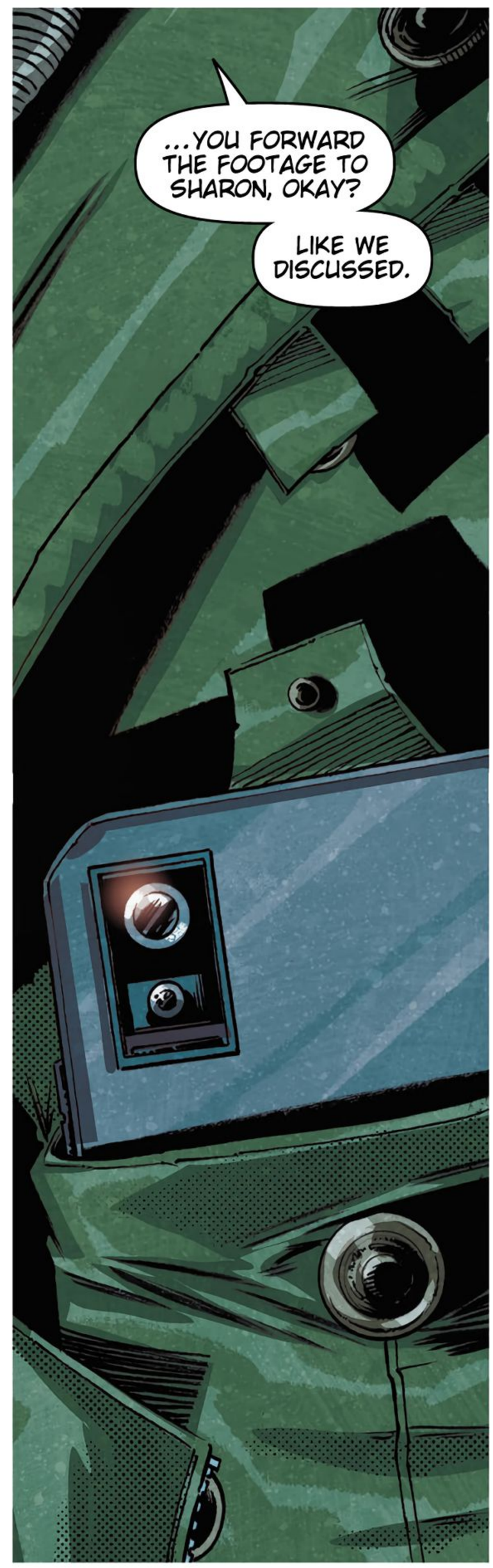


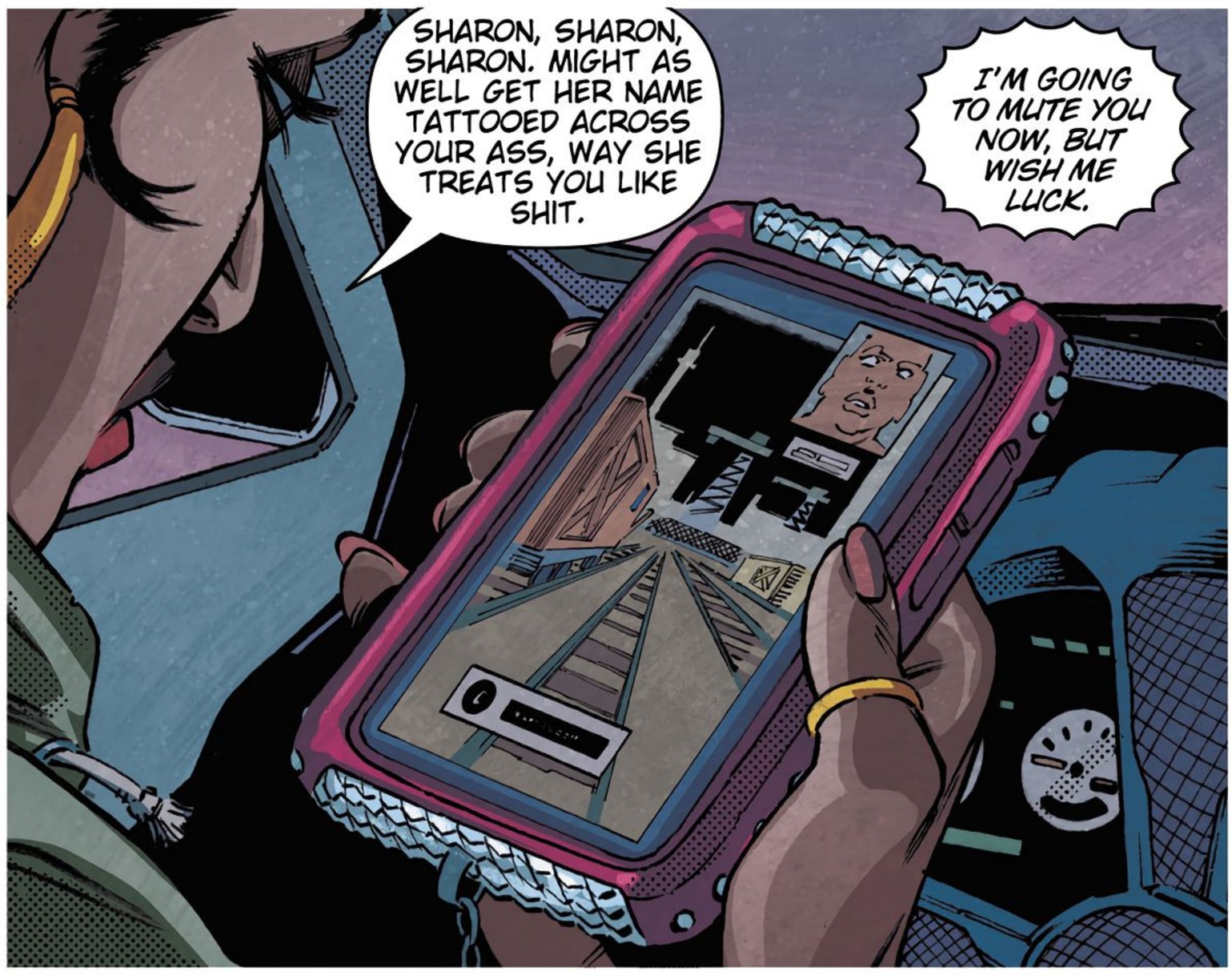
DULUTH, MINNESOTA.
THIS IS NOT A GOOD PLAN, SKINNER.

WE CAN STILL CALL THE COPS. YOU CAN STILL TURN AROUND.
BEEN CHASING THESE PEOPLE A LONG TIME, PANCAKE. I'M READY TO LOOK THEM IN THE EYE.

THEY'VE NEVER WANTED TO TALK BEFORE. THIS IS DIFFERENT.
I CAN FEEL IT.

BUT IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO ME...


...YOU FORWARD THE FOOTAGE TO SHARON, OKAY?
LIKE WE DISCUSSED.


SHARON, SHARON, SHARON. MIGHT AS WELL GET HER NAME TATTOOED ACROSS YOUR ASS, WAY SHE TREATS YOU LIKE SHIT.
I'M GOING TO MUTE YOU NOW, BUT WISH ME LUCK.

MORE THAN LUCK. I'M PRAYING ON IT.
MCDONALD'S?

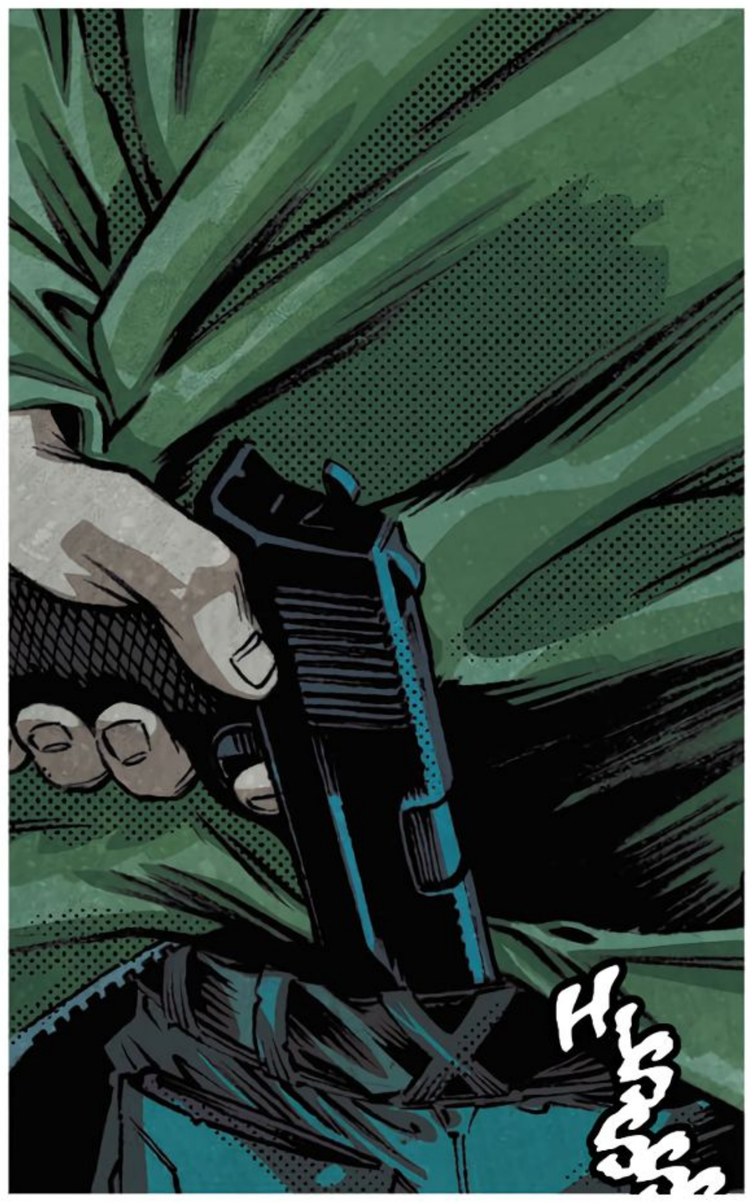
WHAT YOU SAY?
MCDONALD'S.

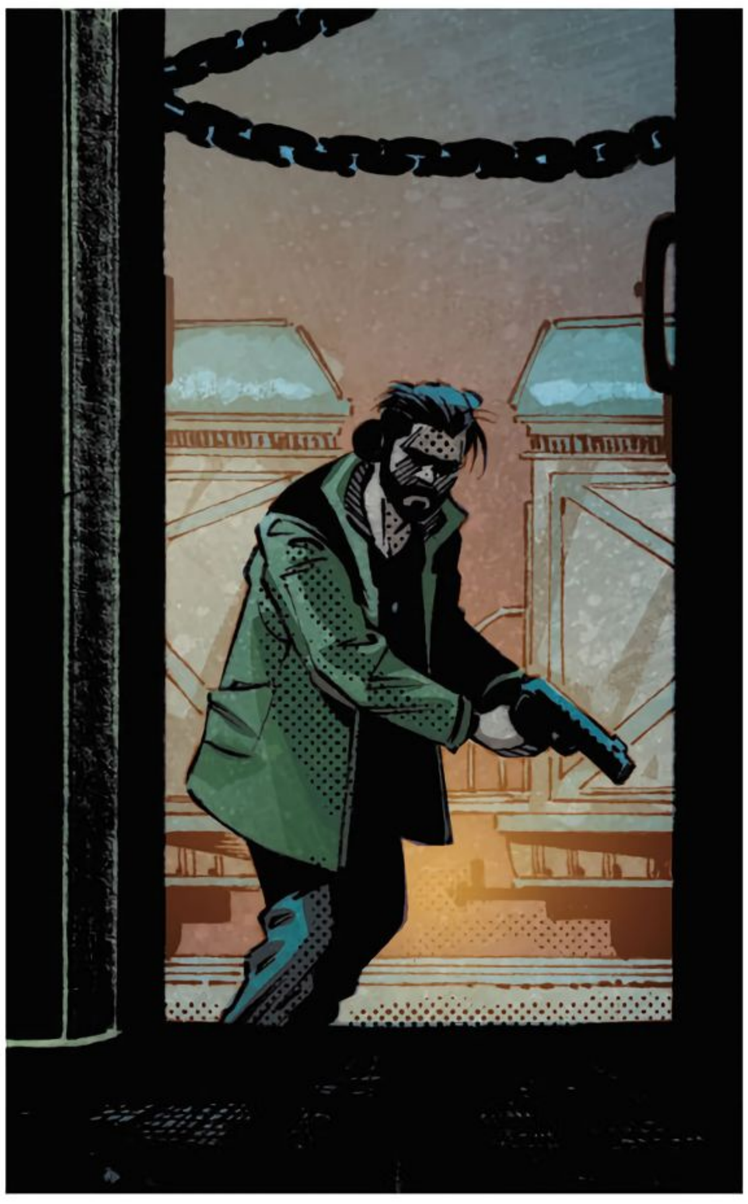
GIVEN WHAT YOU BEEN THROUGH, BABY GIRL, YOU GO ON AND EAT ALL THE MCDONALD'S IN THE WORLD.
YOU LIVE THAT MCDONALD'S LIFE.

I'M HERE!

WHERE ARE YOU?

HSSSS

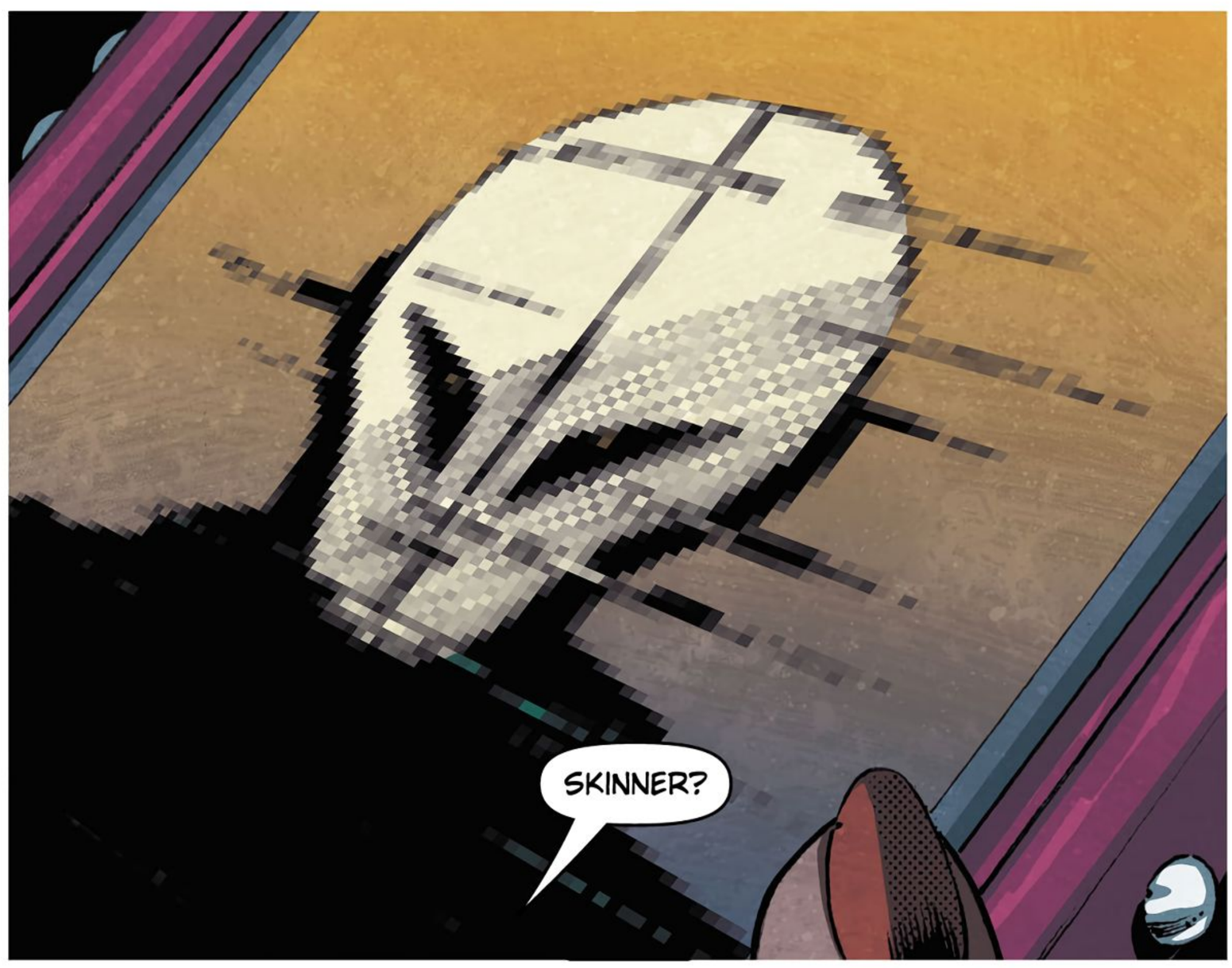

HSSS



SETTLE DOWN, LITTLE FELLA.
HISSSS

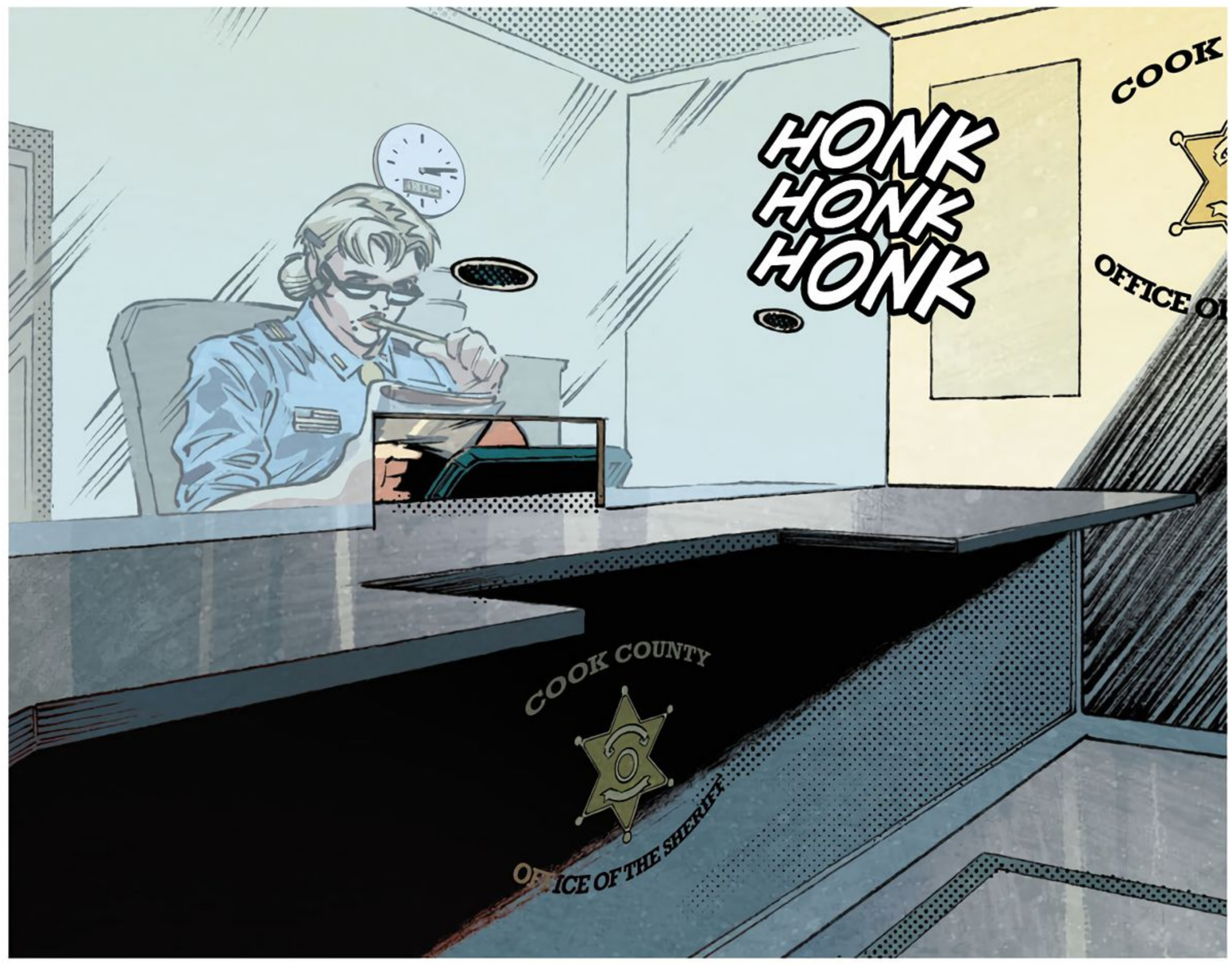
THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.

HOLD ON NOW.


SKINNER?

SKINNER, WHAT'S HAPPENING?
DON'T YOU GO PROVING ME RIGHT GODDAMNIT.

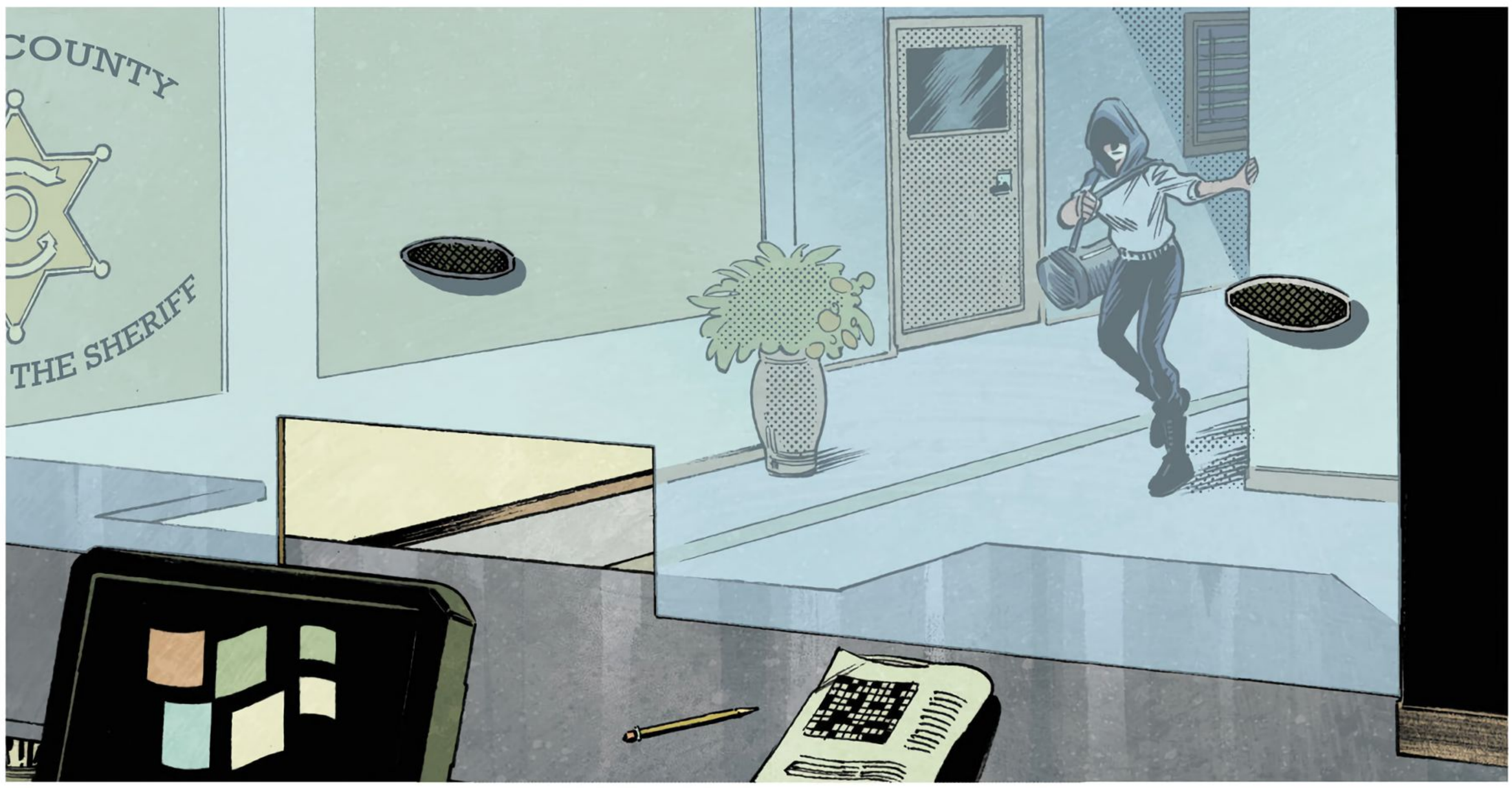
COOK COUNTY
LAW ENFORCEMENT
CENTER.
GRAND MARAIS,
MINNESOTA.
COOK COUNTY
LAW ENFORCEMENT
CENTER


HONK
HONK
HONK
COOK
OFFICE OF
COOK COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

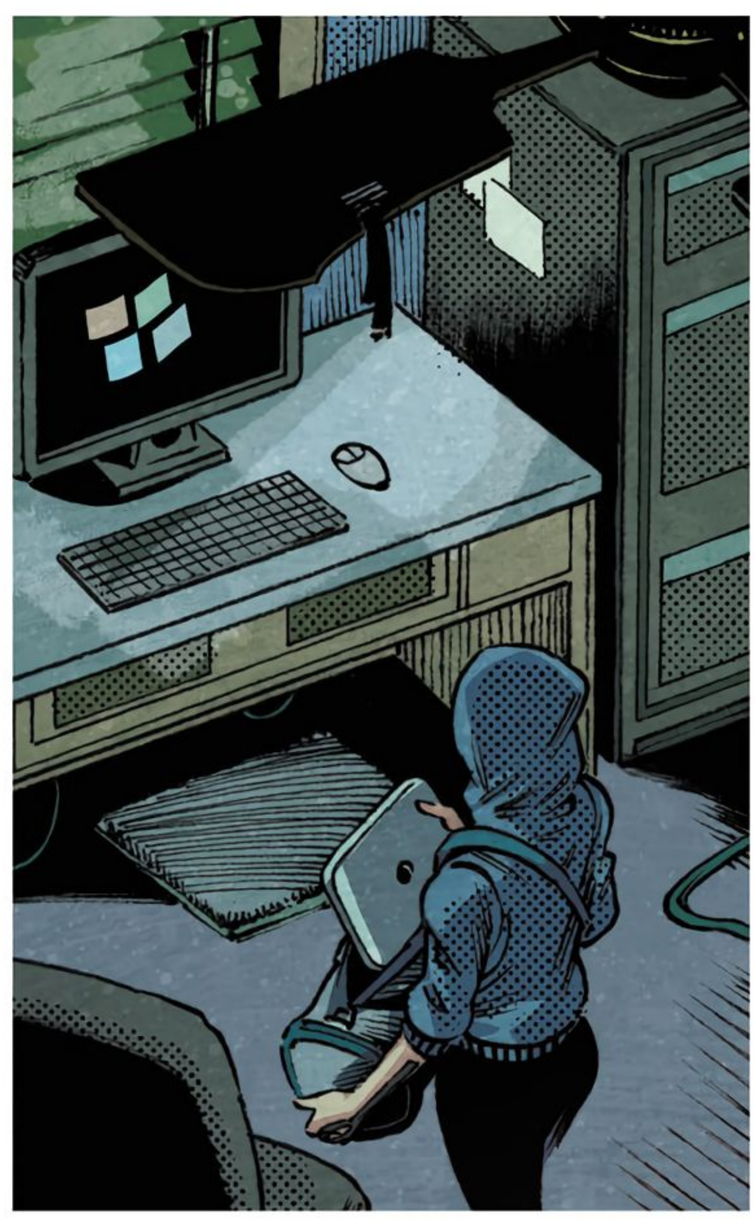
HONK HONK HONK
3:13AM

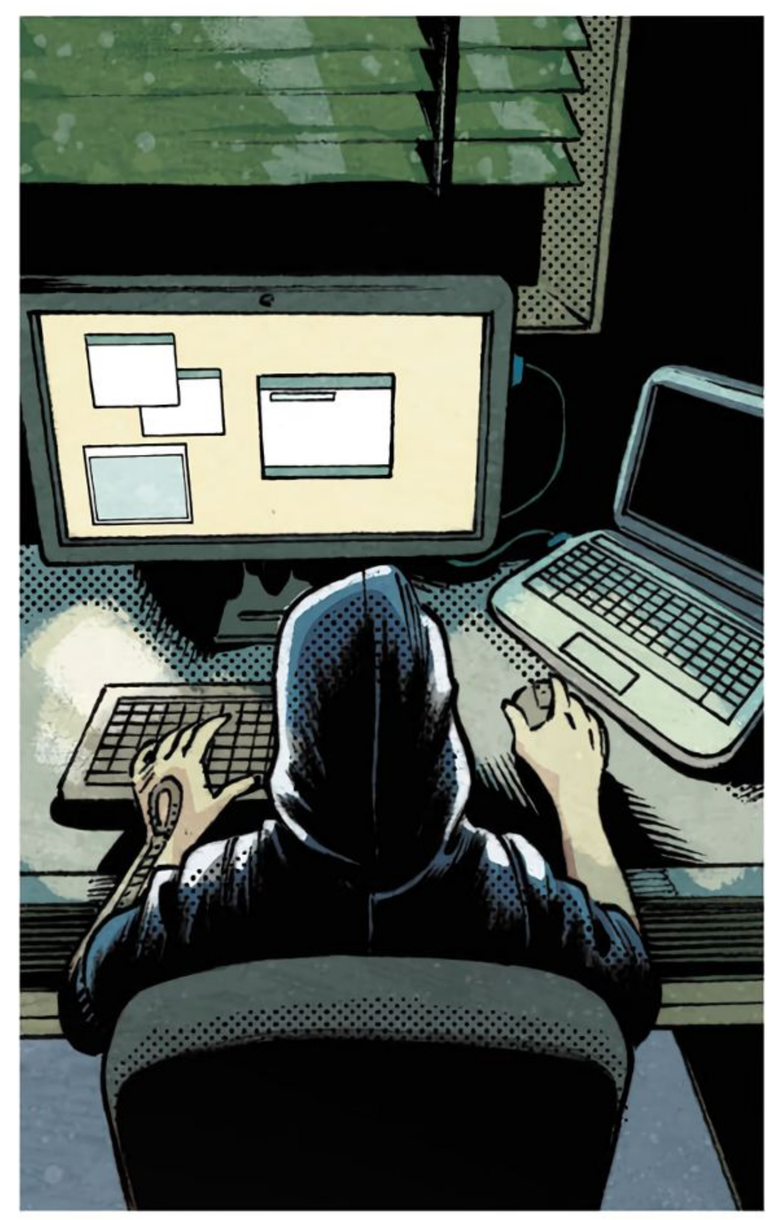
STUPID THING.
HONK
HONK
HONK

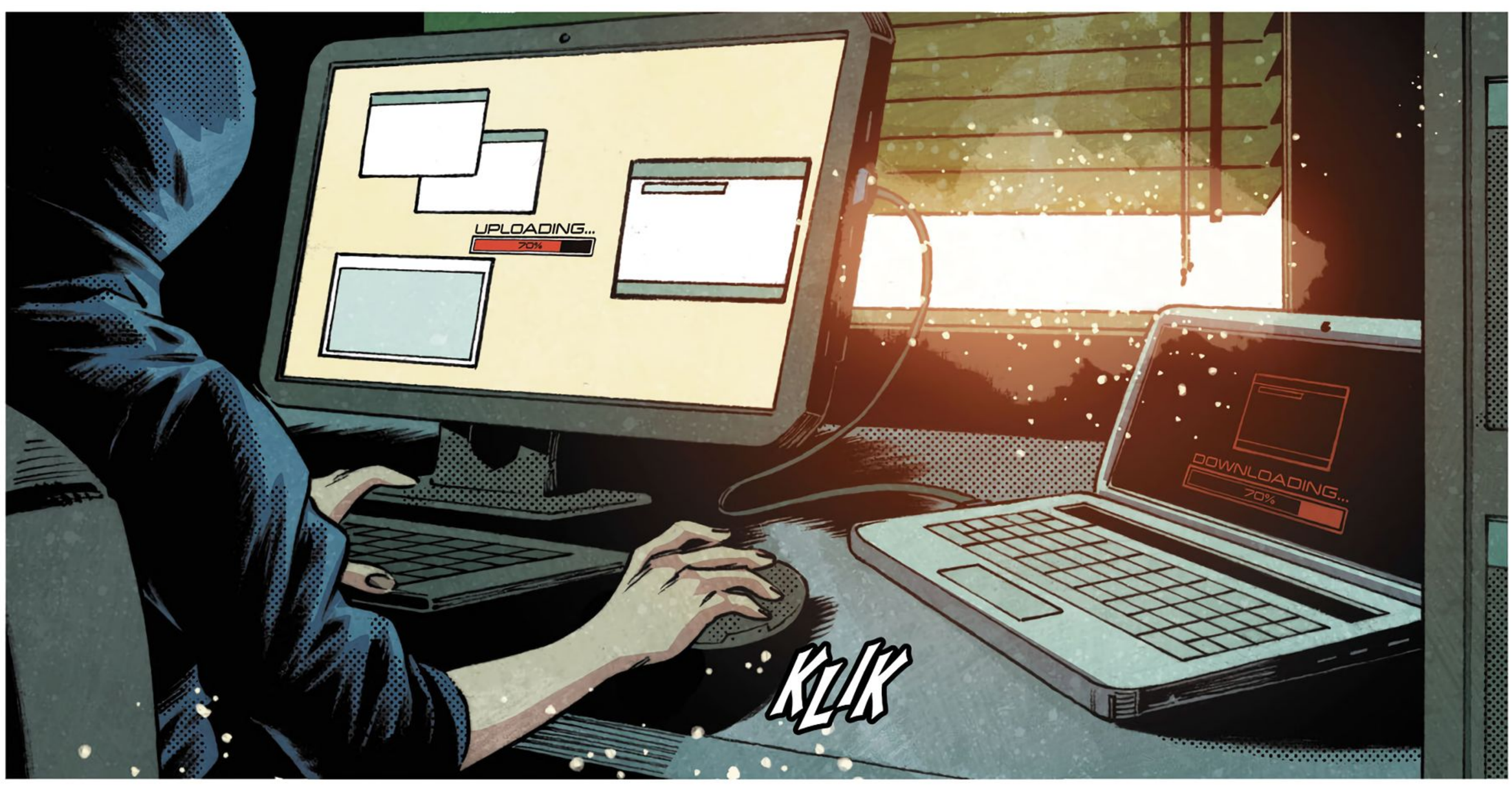
SHUT UP, YOU. SHUT UP.
HONK
HONK
HONK

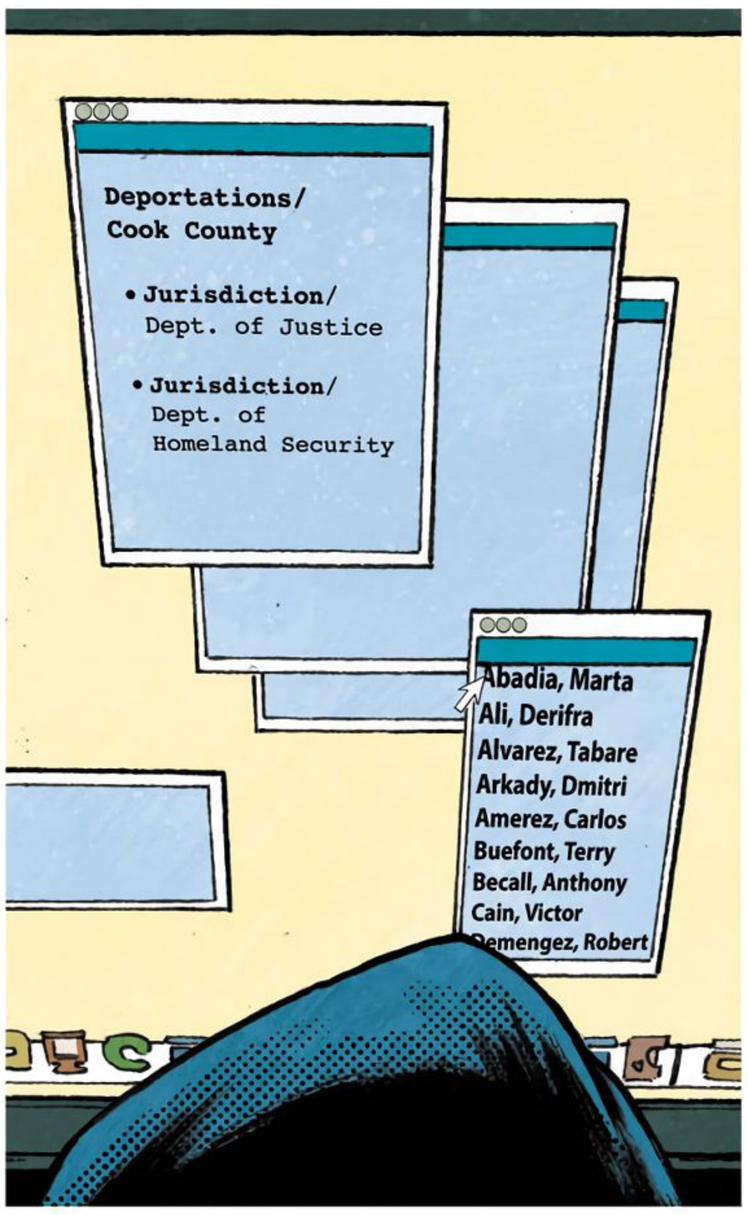

COUNTY
THE SHERIFF

SHERIFF
RIFT





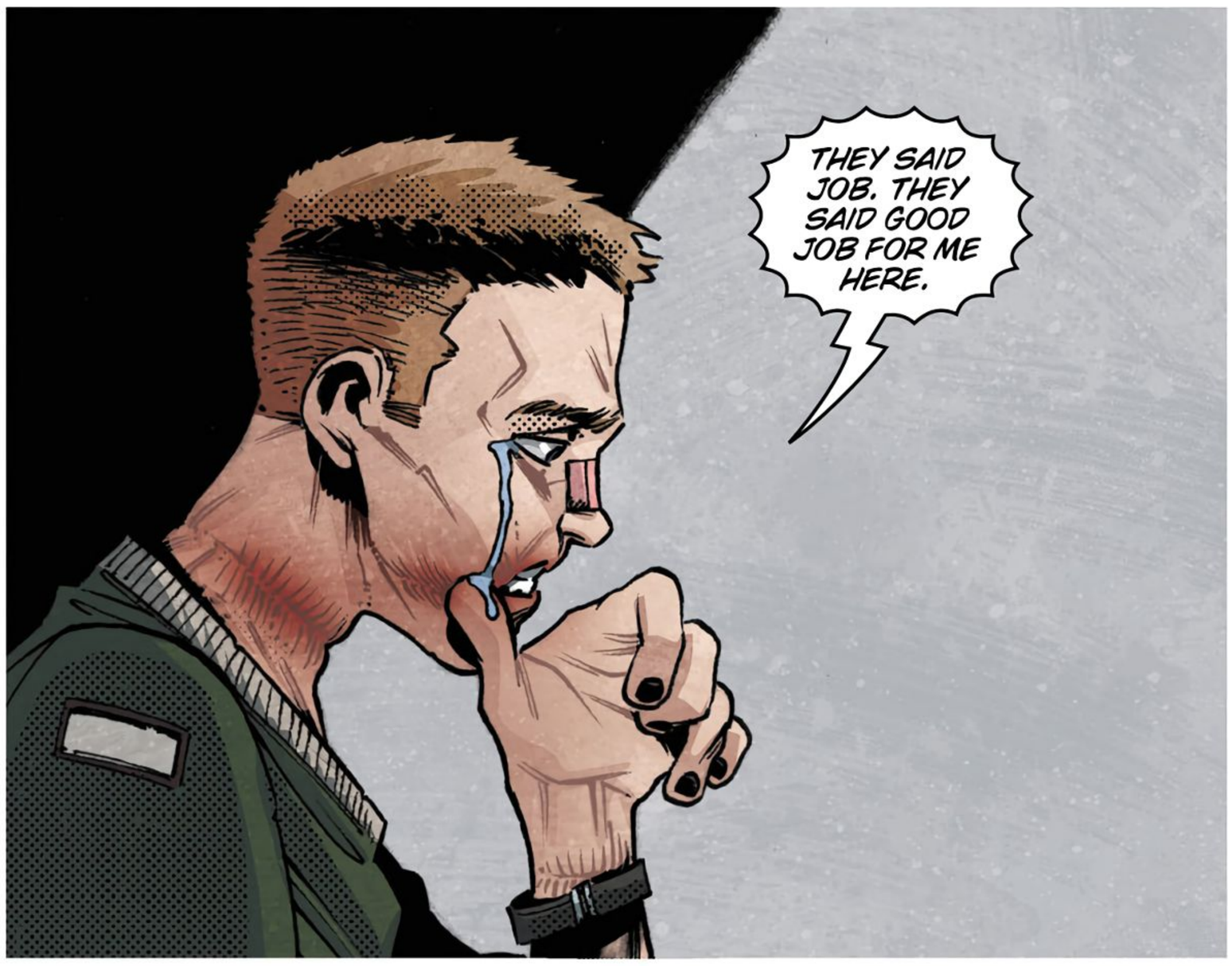

UPLOADING...
70%
DOWNLOADING...
70%
KLIK


Deportations/
Cook County
• Jurisdiction/
Dept. of Justice
• Jurisdiction/
Dept. of
Homeland Security
Abadia, Marta
Ali, Derifra
Alvarez, Tabare
Arkady, Dmitri
Amerez, Carlos
Buefont, Terry
Becall, Anthony
Cain, Victor

Ali, Derifra
Alvarez, Taba
Arkady, Dmit
Amerez, Carl
Buefont, Terr
Becall, Antho
Cain, Victor

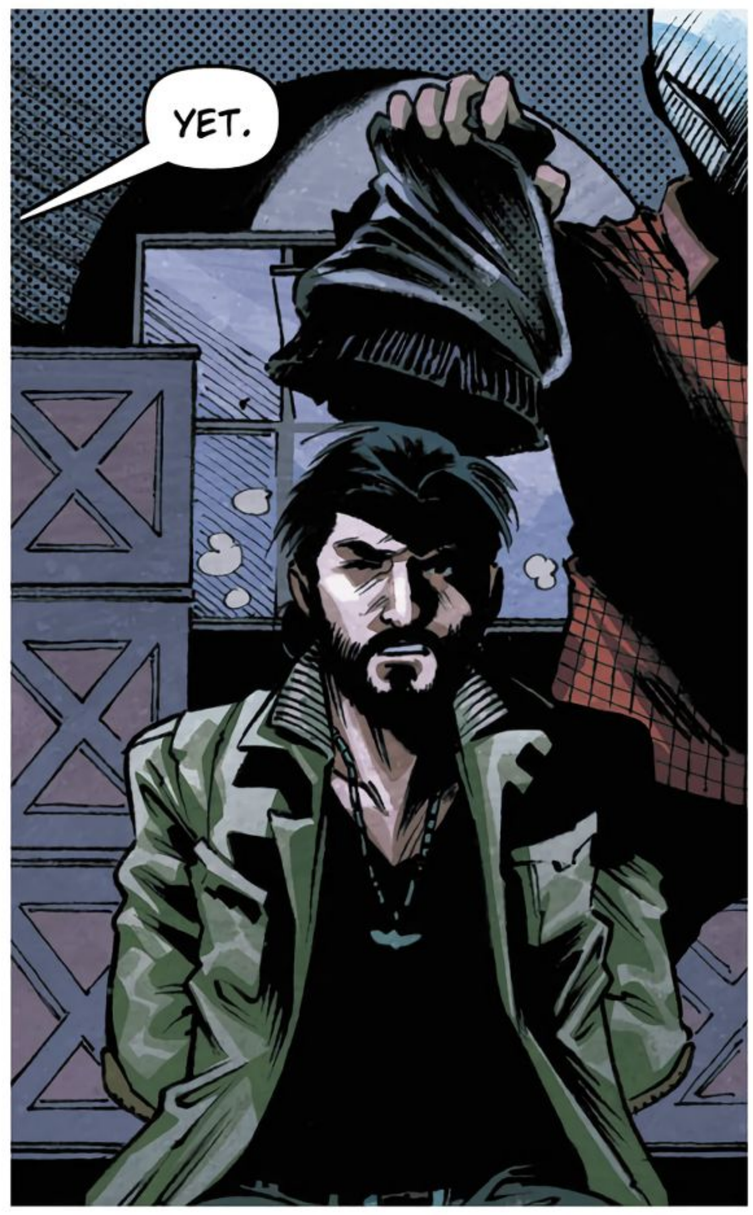
PLEASE. IF YOU SEND ME BACK TO MY COUNTRY, I WILL BE KILLED.

NO SPEAK ENGLISH, ASSHOLE!

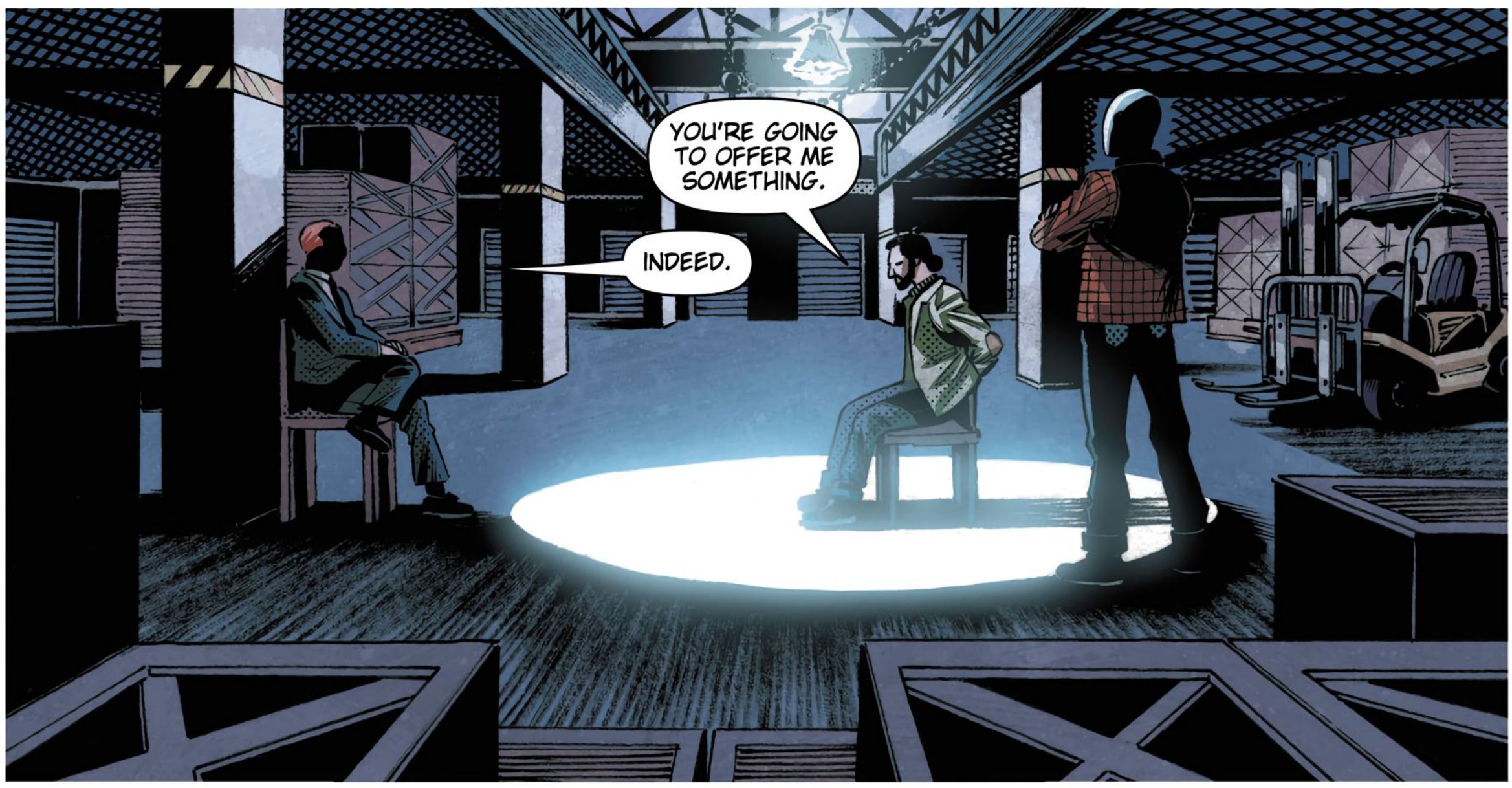

THEY SAID JOB. THEY SAID GOOD JOB FOR ME HERE.

BUT THEY LOCK ME UP AND MAKE ME DO THINGS.

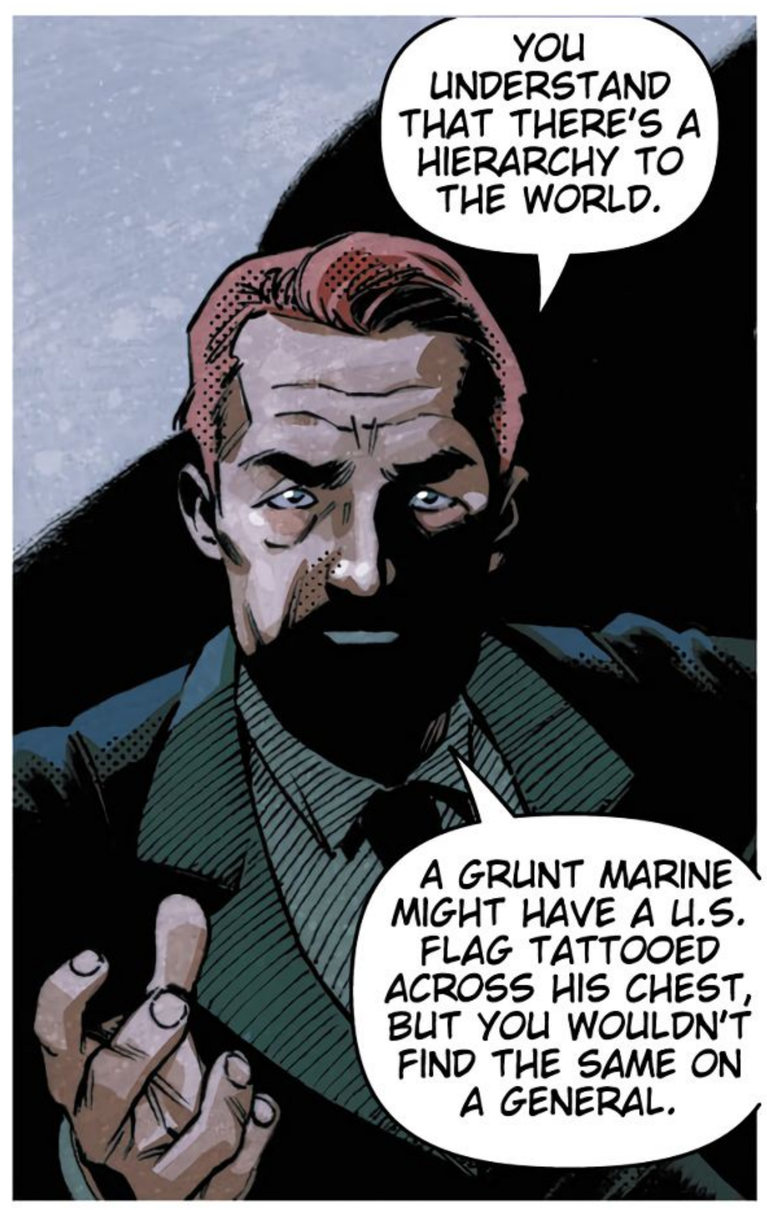
YOU'RE NOT DEAD.


YET.

WHAT DOES THAT TELL YOU?


YOU'RE GOING TO OFFER ME SOMETHING.
INDEED.

YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE THE OTHERS.
NO SLIT TONGUE, YOU MEAN?
IT'S MORE THAN THAT. THE SUIT. YOUR DICTION. I CAN ALREADY TELL YOU'RE NO BLACKTOP BARNEY.


YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THERE'S A HIERARCHY TO THE WORLD.
A GRUNT MARINE MIGHT HAVE A U.S. FLAG TATTOOED ACROSS HIS CHEST, BUT YOU WOULDN'T FIND THE SAME ON A GENERAL.

WE HAVE OUR SOLDIERS AND WE HAVE OUR GENERALS.
TAKE MY FRIEND HERE, FOR EXAMPLE.

HE'S AN ESPECIALLY DEVOTED SOLDIER.

HOW DO YOU FREAKS EVEN FIND EACH OTHER?
SOME OF US ARE BORN INTO IT. SOME OF US ARE ENLISTED.
ENLISTED?

NO MATTER WHAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN, THERE'S A MESSAGE BOARD ON THE INTERNET FOR YOU.
WE SOUGHT OUT THE PEOPLE WHO LIKED BLOOD.

NOBODY LIKES TO BE ALONE, AFTER ALL. EVERYONE WANTS TO FEEL THAT THEY'RE PART OF A HIGHER CALLING.
WE ARE THAT HIGHER CALLING.

I THINK YOU FELT THAT SAME CALLING, QUENTIN.

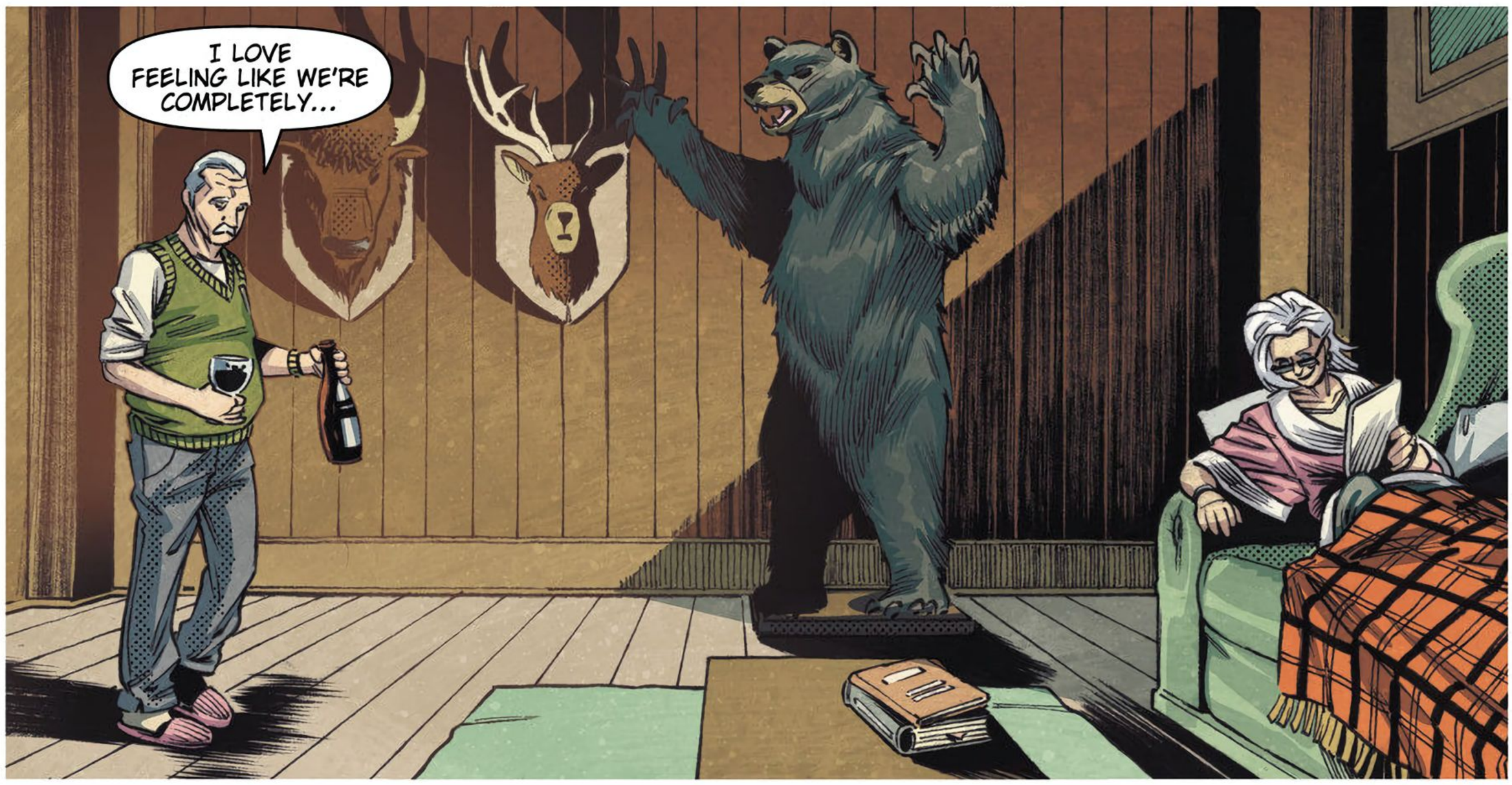
WHY ELSE WOULD YOU CHASE US ALL THESE YEARS? RUINING YOUR MARRIAGE. RUINING YOUR HEALTH. RUINING YOUR CAREER.

WHY ELSE WOULD YOU HAVE COME TONIGHT?
I'M OFFERING YOU A CHANCE TO SHED THAT OLD RUINED SKIN OF YOURS.

AND BE REBORN WITH US.

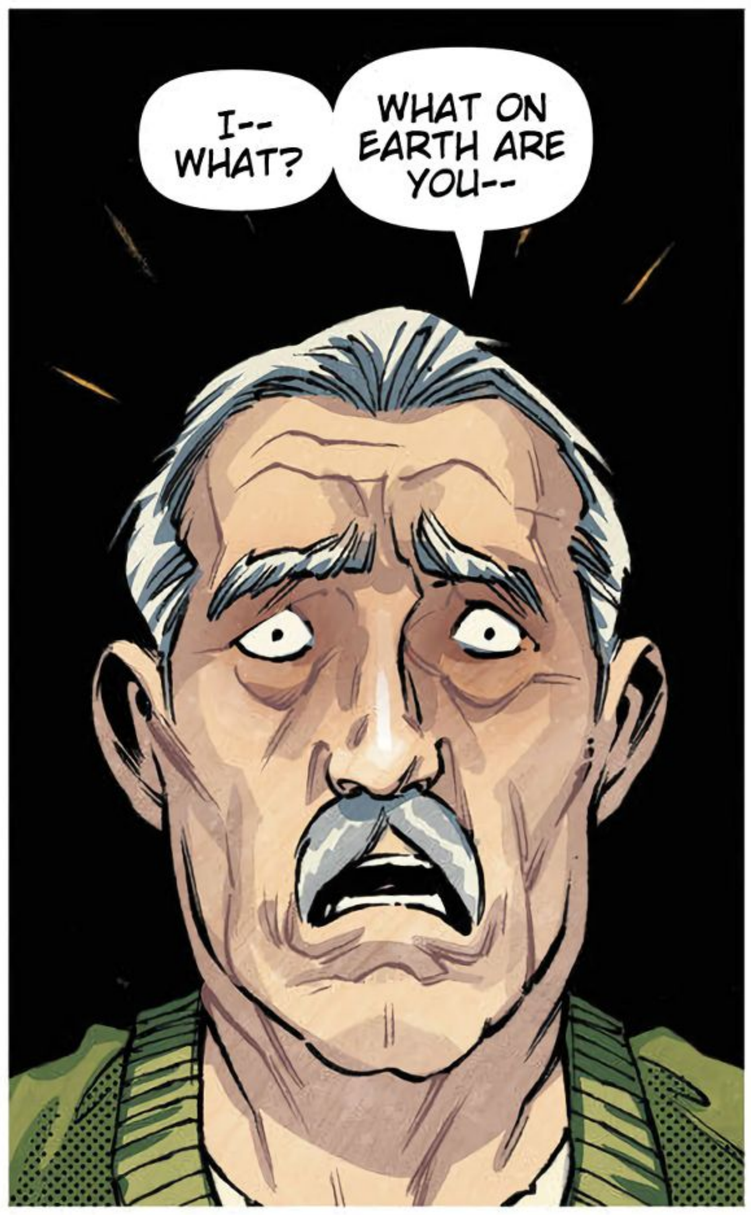
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME MORE ZINFANDEL, DEAR?
YES, PLEASE, DEAR.

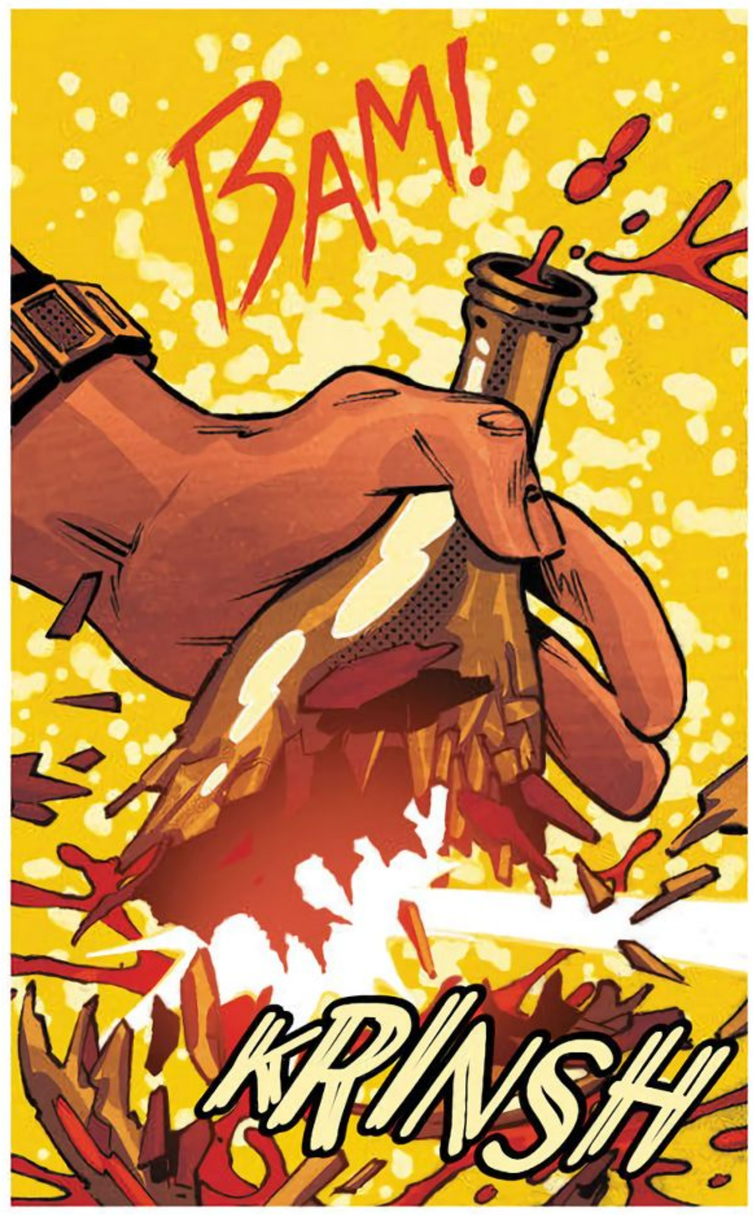
IT'S WONDERFUL, ISN'T IT? GETTING AWAY FROM THE CITY.
SO WONDERFUL.


I LOVE FEELING LIKE WE'RE COMPLETELY...

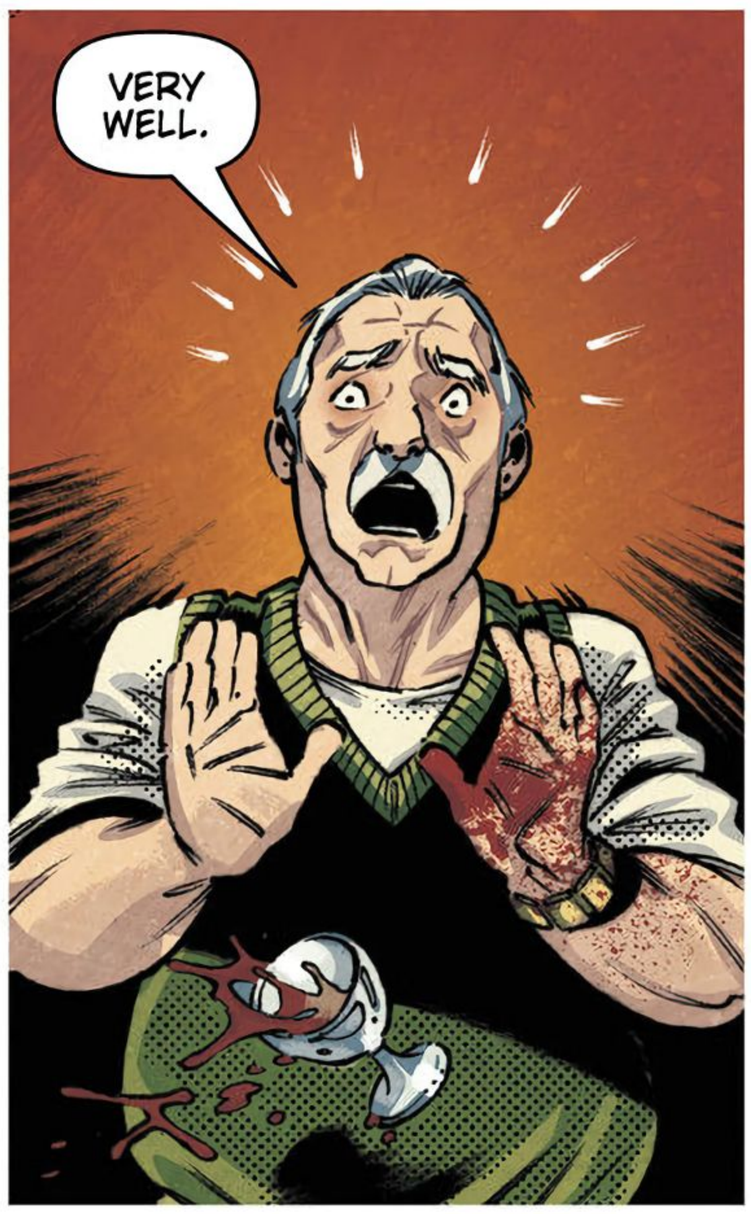
...ALONE.

DO YOU WANT MONEY? IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT? MY WALLET IS IN--
SHOW ME THE SECRET ROOM.


I-- WHAT?
WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU--


BAM!
KRINSH

SHOW ME THE SECRET ROOM.


VERY WELL.

HOW DID YOU--
SHUT UP.

KLIK

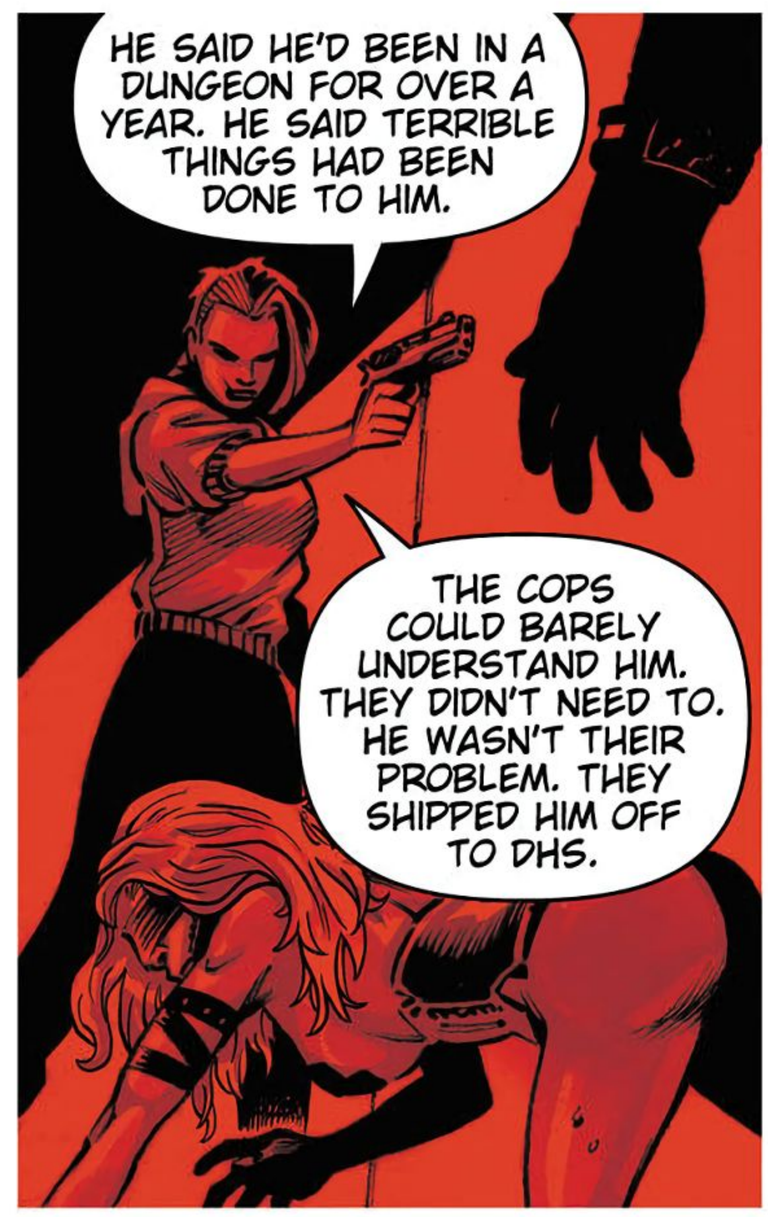
YOU FIRST.

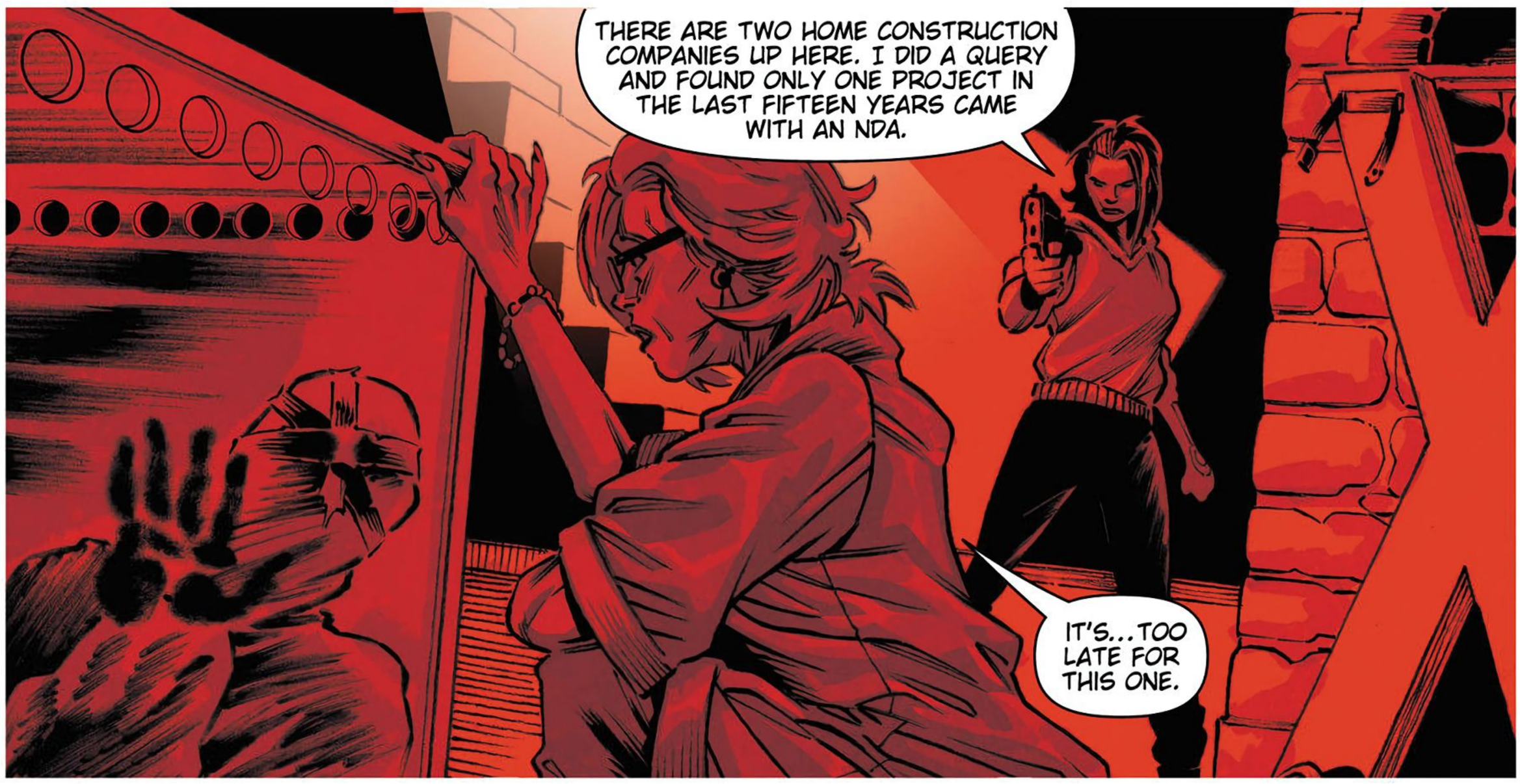
UNLOCK THEM.
MY HAND. IT'S BLEEDING. PLEASE.

YOUR HEAD BLEEDS NEXT.
UNLOCK THEM.

THERE'S A LONG LIST OF ILLEGALS PICKED UP IN COOK COUNTY.
A LOT OF THEM GET CAUGHT SOON AFTER CROSSING THE BORDER.

BUT THERE WERE A FEW THAT STOOD OUT. INCLUDING A UKRAINIAN.
A COP PICKED HIM UP RUNNING ALONG THE EDGE OF THE HIGHWAY. HE WAS NAKED. HIS FEET SHREDDED.


HE SAID HE'D BEEN IN A DUNGEON FOR OVER A YEAR. HE SAID TERRIBLE THINGS HAD BEEN DONE TO HIM.
THE COPS COULD BARELY UNDERSTAND HIM. THEY DIDN'T NEED TO. HE WASN'T THEIR PROBLEM. THEY SHIPPED HIM OFF TO DHS.


THERE ARE TWO HOME CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES UP HERE. I DID A QUERY AND FOUND ONLY ONE PROJECT IN THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS CAME WITH AN NDA.
IT'S...TOO LATE FOR THIS ONE.

YOU LIKE HURTING PEOPLE?
BLAM

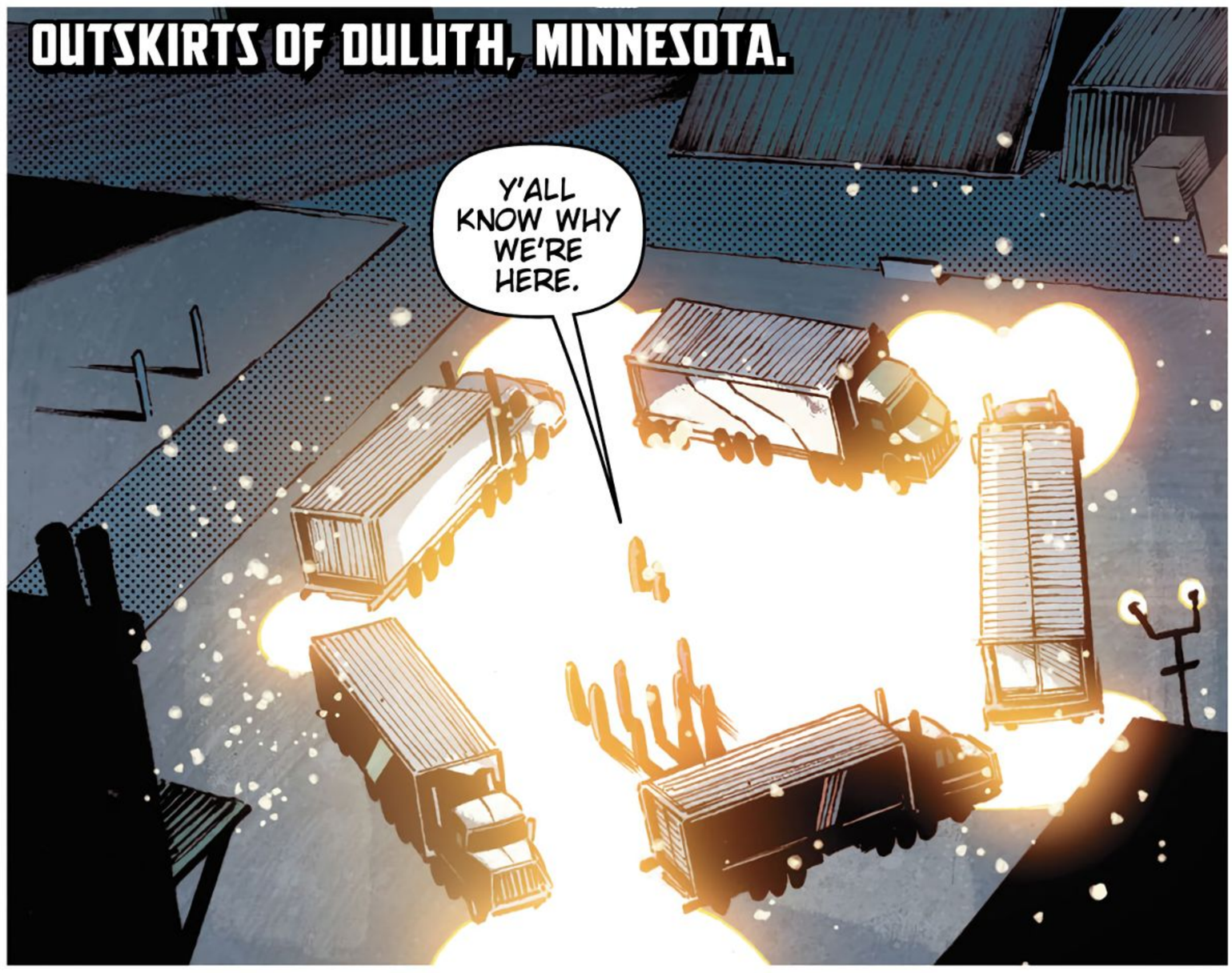
HRRRG
SO DO I.

GO ON. IT'S OKAY.
TAKE YOUR TIME. TAKE THEIR CLOTHES. TAKE THEIR CARS. TAKE THEIR MONEY.

TAKE WHATEVER YOU WANT AND DON'T LOOK BACK.

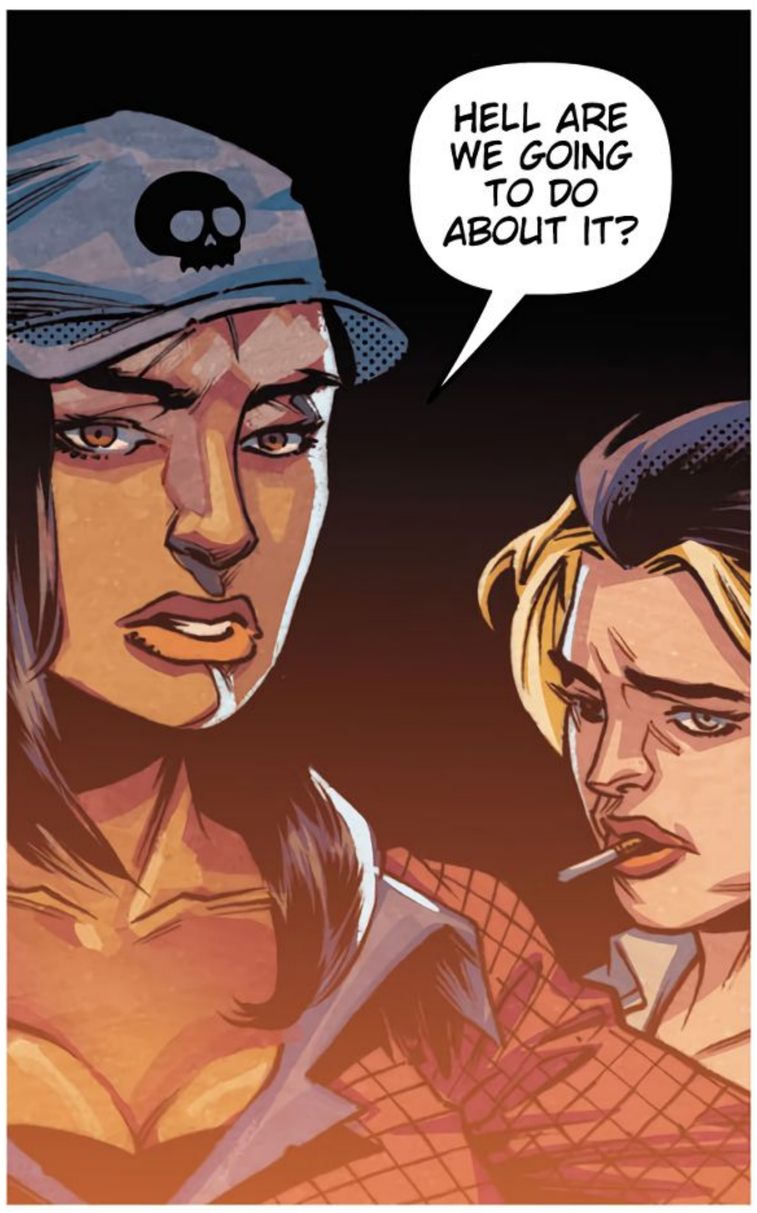
I SAW THIS HOUSE COST TWO MIL TO BUILD. AND IT'S A SECOND HOME. MAYBE A THIRD.
I WONDER WHAT *YOUR LIVES* ARE WORTH?

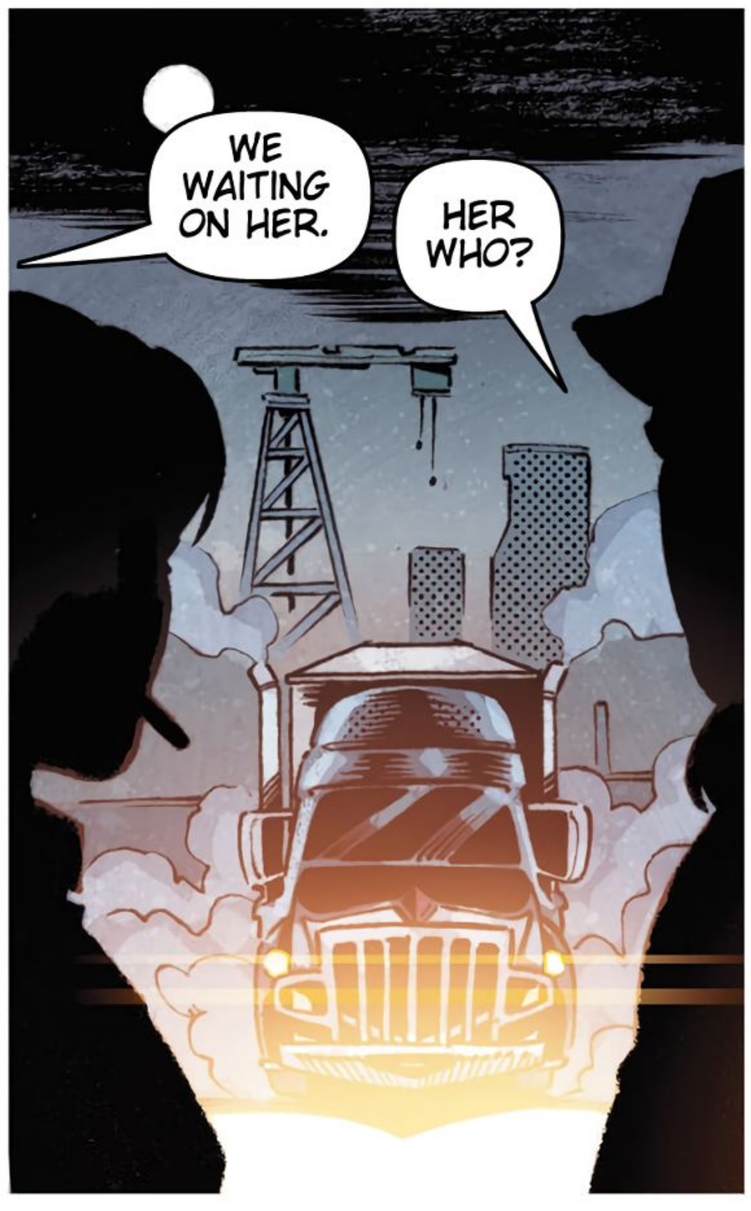
LET'S FIND OUT.
YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME EVERYTHING I WANT TO KNOW.


OUTSKIRTS OF DULUTH, MINNESOTA.
Y'ALL KNOW WHY WE'RE HERE.

YOU ON THE ROAD LONG ENOUGH, YOU HEAR THINGS, SEE THINGS.
WRONG THINGS.

RAPED. ROBBED. KILLED.
SO MANY KILLED, AND NOBODY TALKING ABOUT IT OUTSIDE A CB.


HELL ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?


WE WAITING ON HER.
HER WHO?

HER. THAT'S WHO.

IT'S ALWAYS BEEN THIS WAY. SINCE THE BEGINNING.
THE SNAKE EATS THE MOUSE. THE WEAK PERISH, THE STRONG FLOURISH.

RITUALS ARE IMPORTANT. BELIEVING IN SOMETHING BIGGER THAN YOU IS IMPORTANT.
WE KEEP THE OLD WAYS ALIVE.

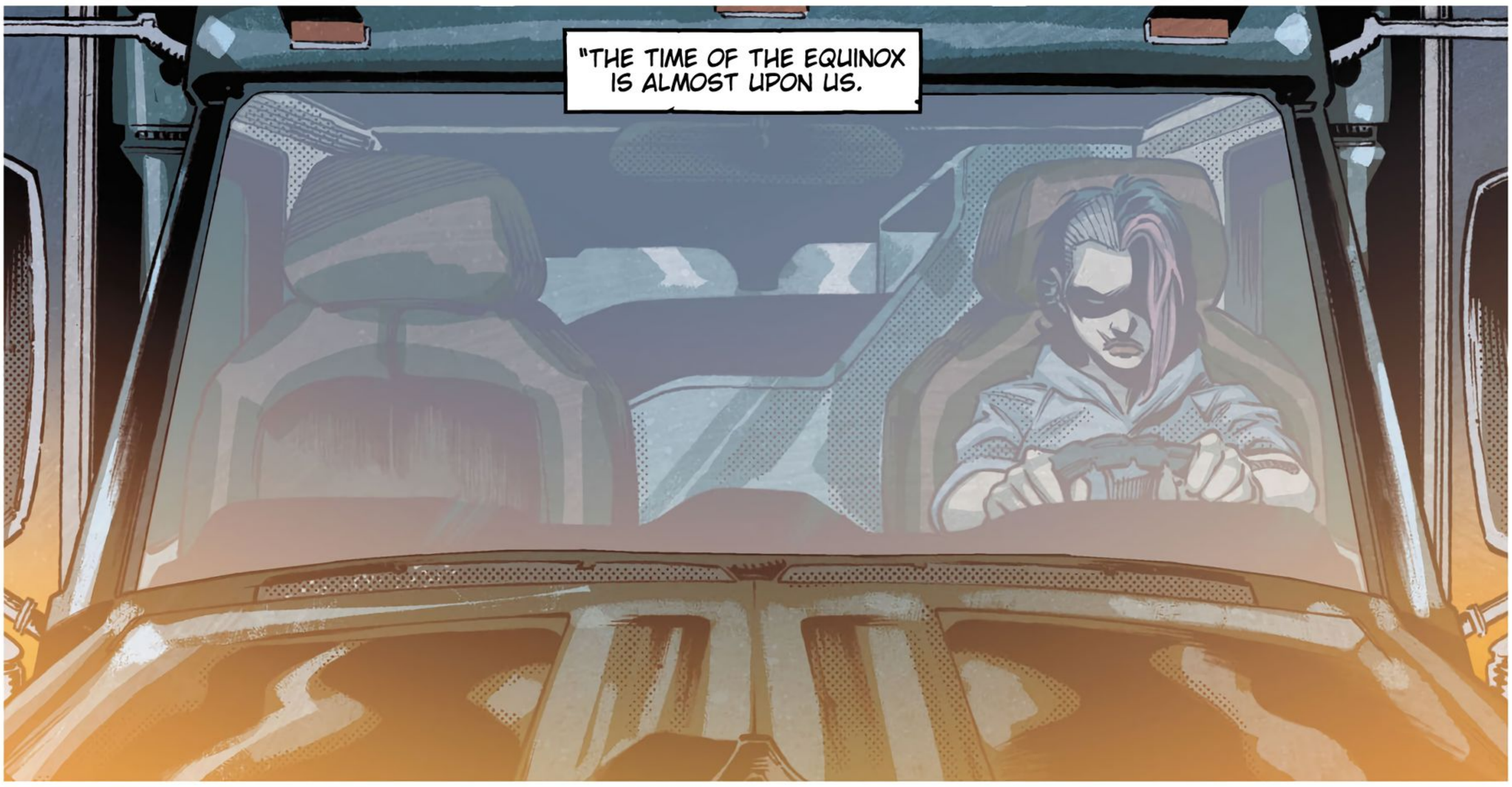
YOU KNEW THAT I WAS GOING TO OFFER YOU SOMETHING.
YOU CAN HAVE YOUR JOB BACK AT THE BUREAU. IF YOU JOIN US.

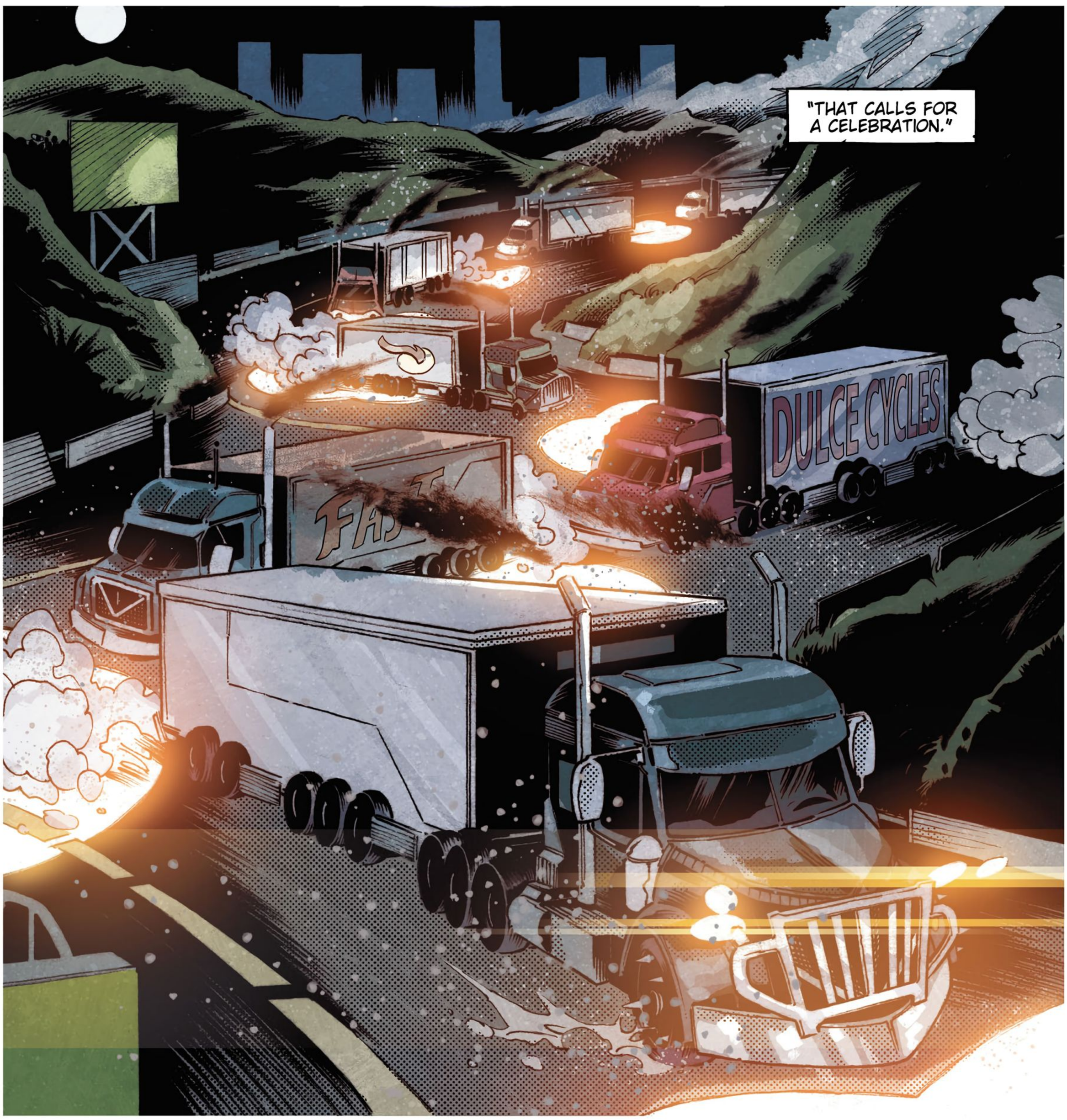
I SHOULD BE SURPRISED.
BUT A PART OF ME ALWAYS KNEW HOW DEEP THIS MIGHT GO.
WHAT DO YOU SAY?

I SAY FUCK YOU.

VERY WELL.
WE STILL HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR YOU TO PLAY.

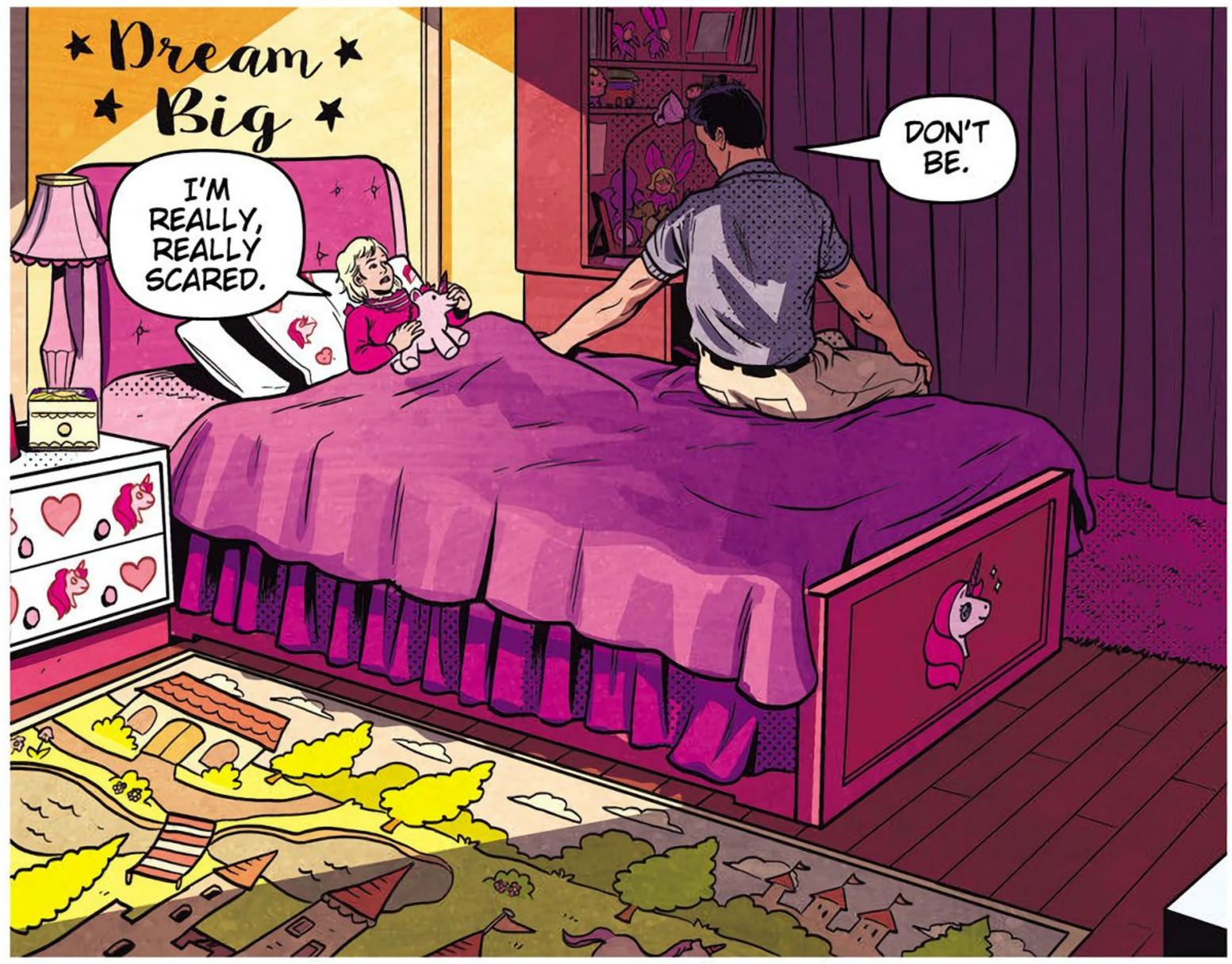
LOAD HIM UP.

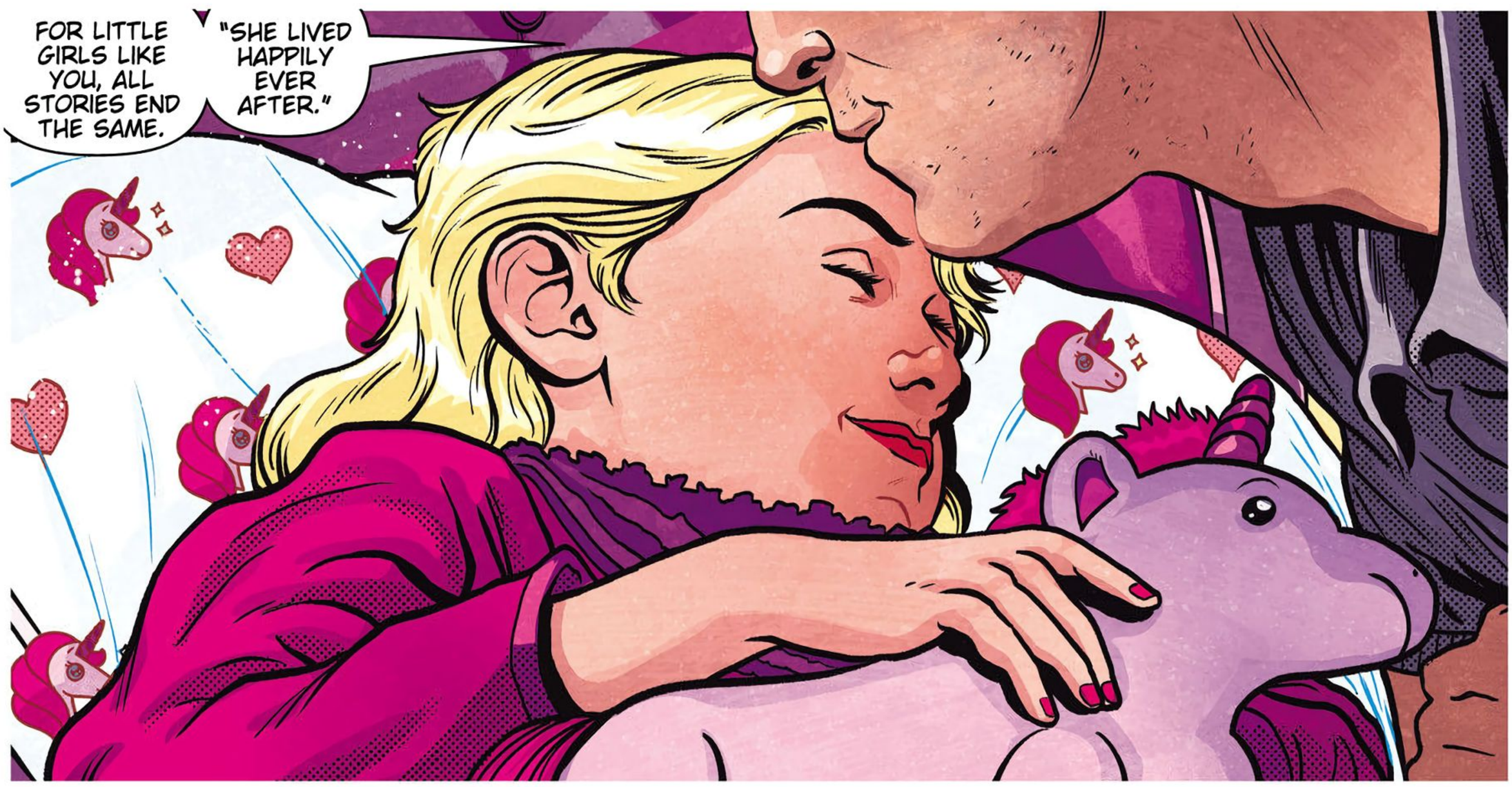

"THE TIME OF THE EQUINOX IS ALMOST UPON US.


"THAT CALLS FOR A CELEBRATION."
DULCE CYCLES

BRENT NICKLEY

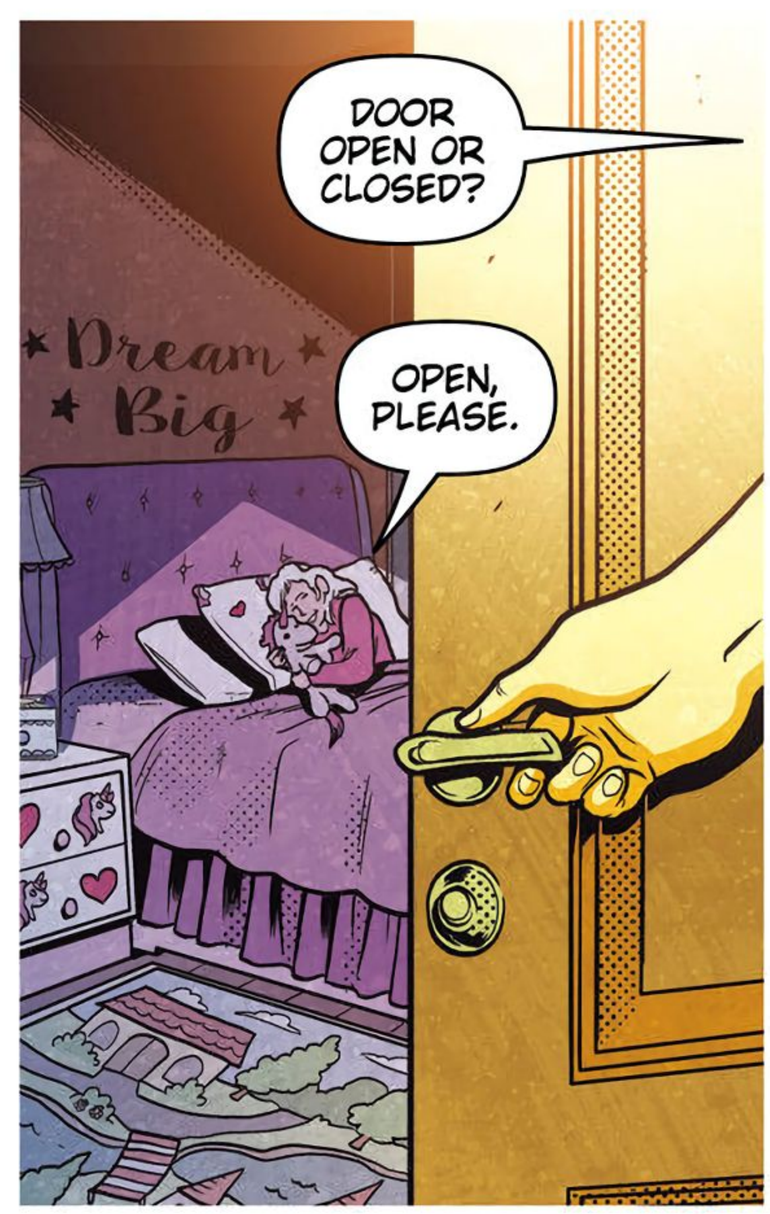
I'M SCARED.

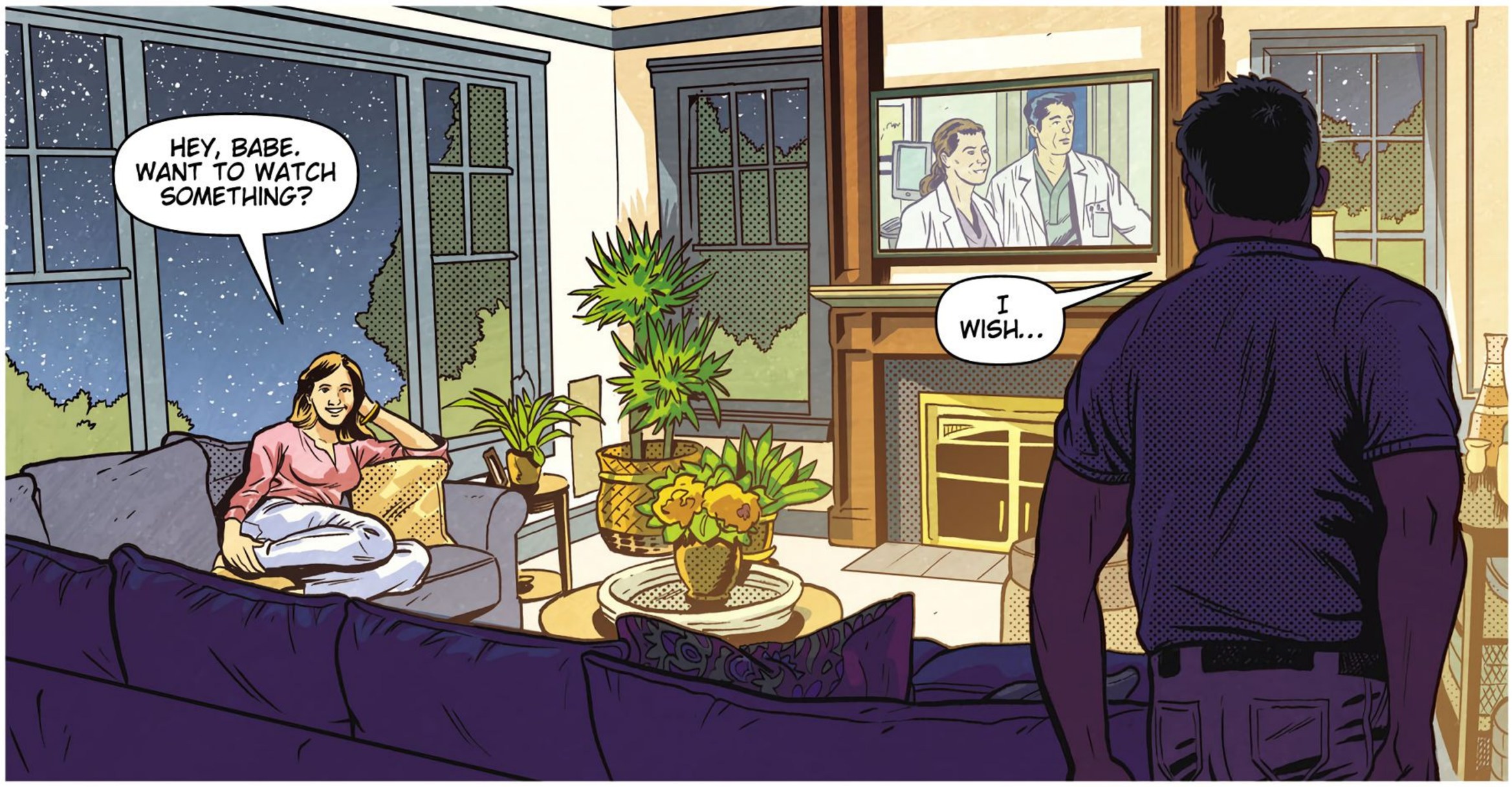

Dream Big
I'M REALLY, REALLY SCARED.
DON'T BE.


FOR LITTLE GIRLS LIKE YOU, ALL STORIES END THE SAME.
"SHE LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER."

BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE FOR EVERYBODY.
NOT FOR EVERYBODY, NO.
CHK

SOME WILL ALWAYS HAVE TO SUFFER.
BUT NOT YOU. BECAUSE YOU'RE LUCKY AND SPECIAL.

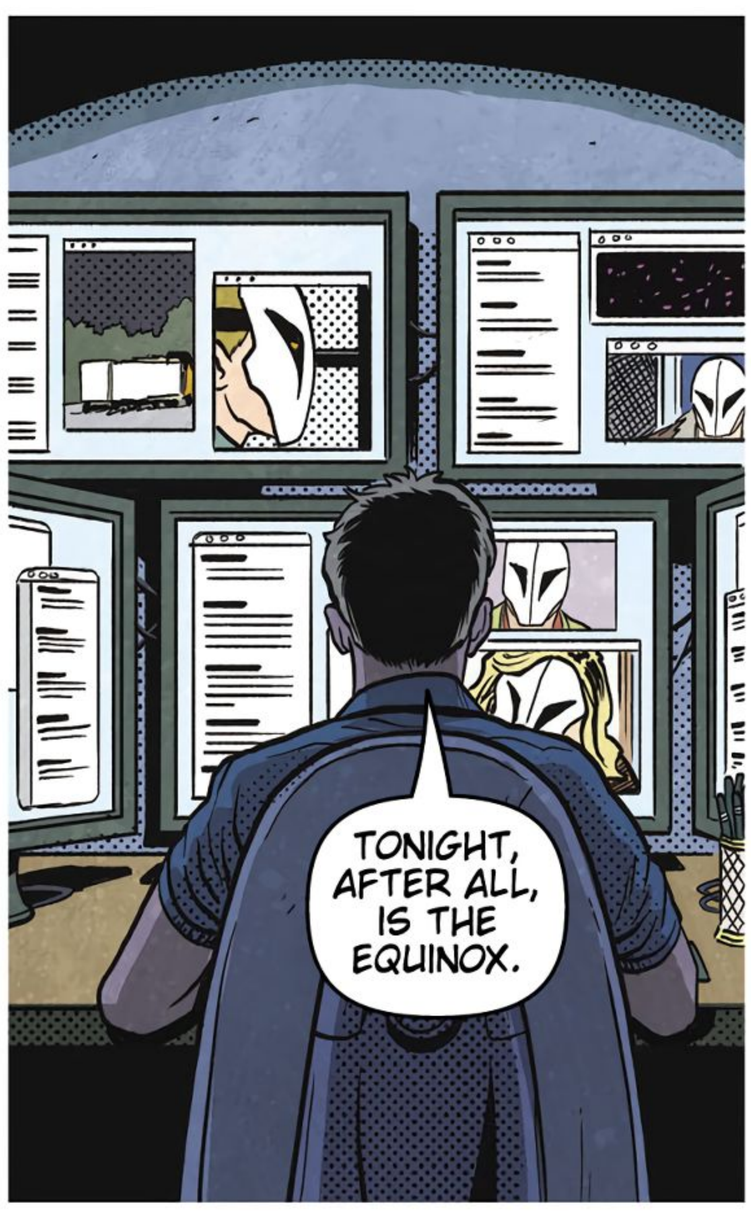

DOOR OPEN OR CLOSED?
Dream Big
OPEN, PLEASE.

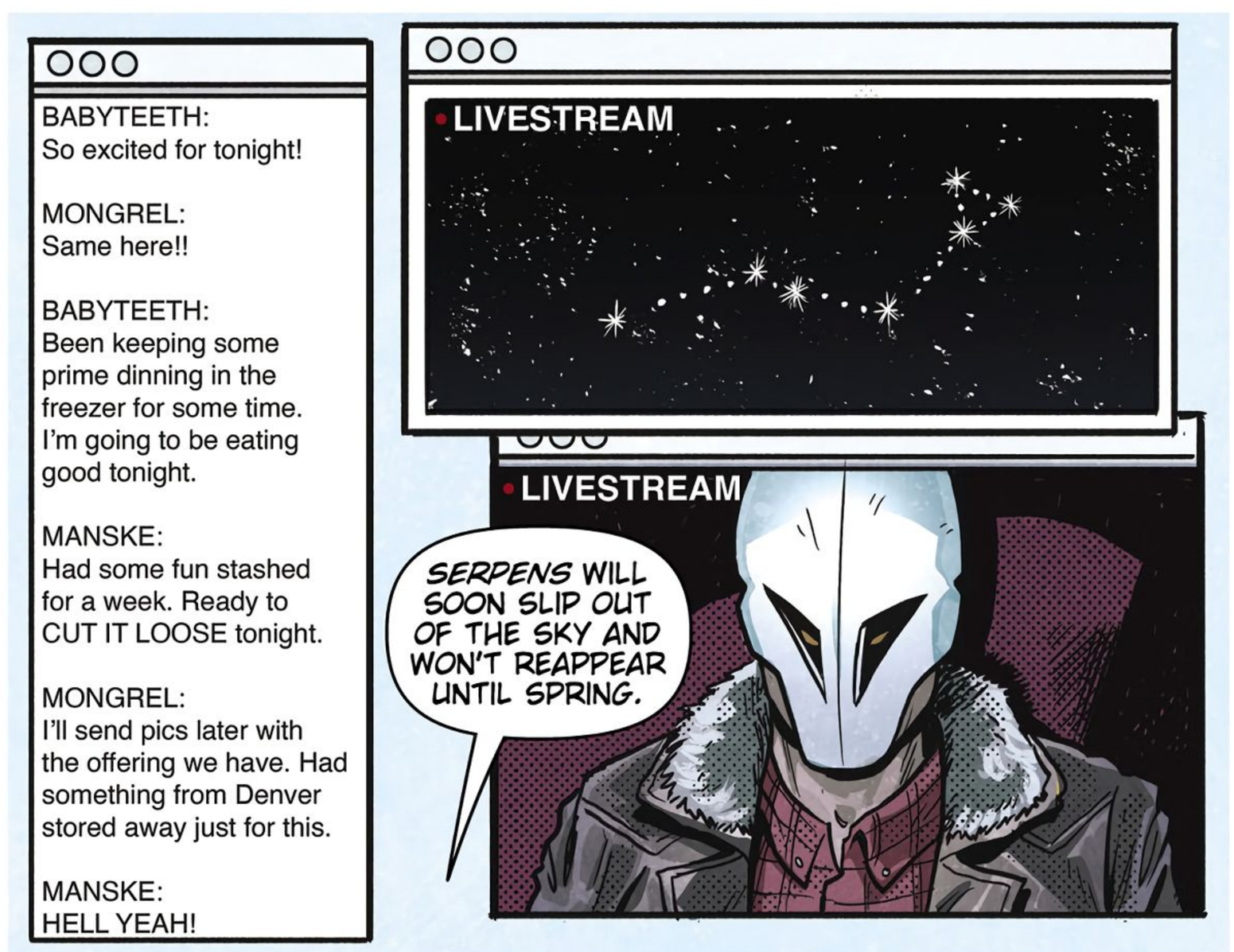

HEY, BABE. WANT TO WATCH SOMETHING?
I WISH...

BUT I'VE GOT A LOT OF WORK TO DO YET.

DON'T WAIT UP FOR ME.

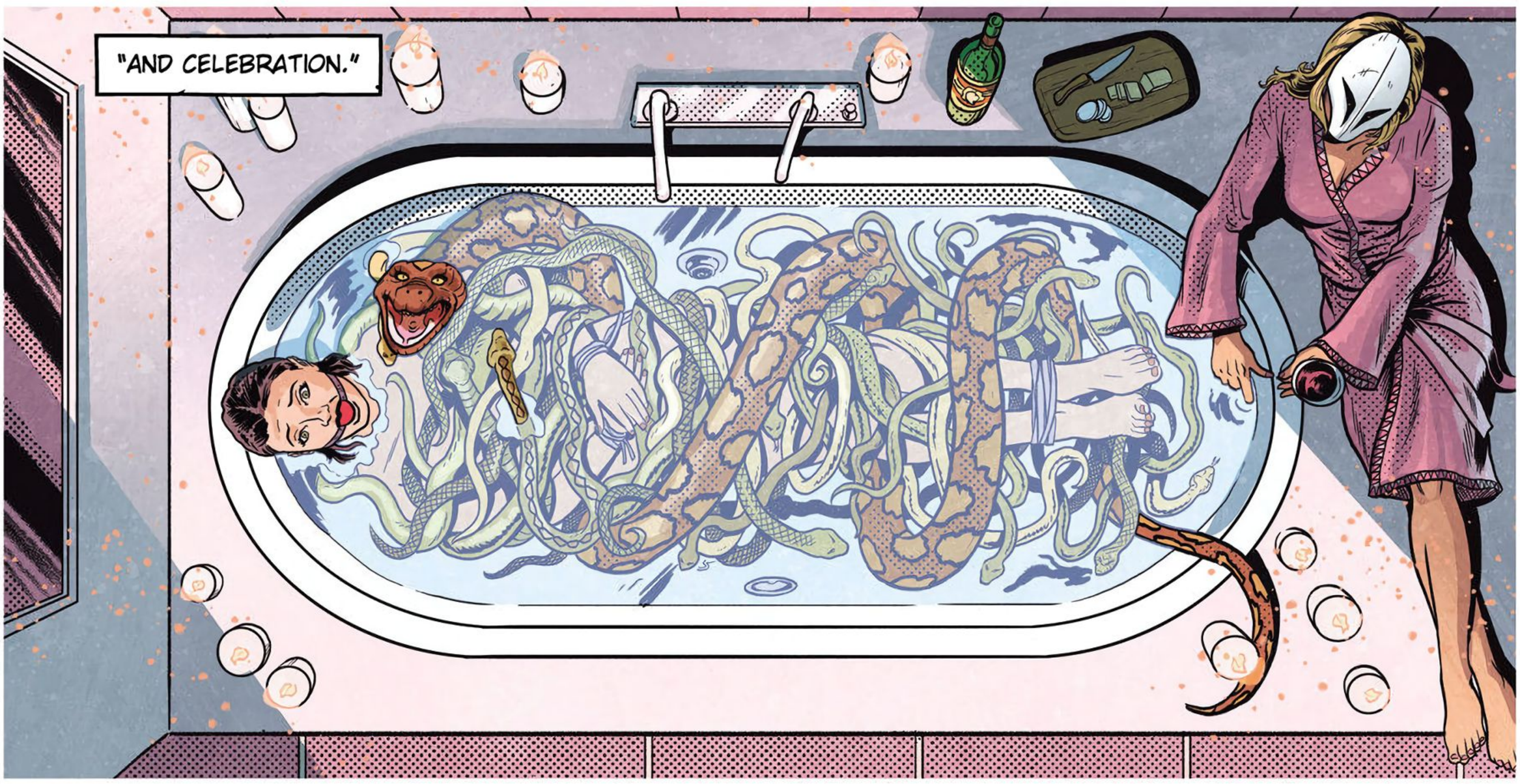
I'M GOING TO BE BUSY.

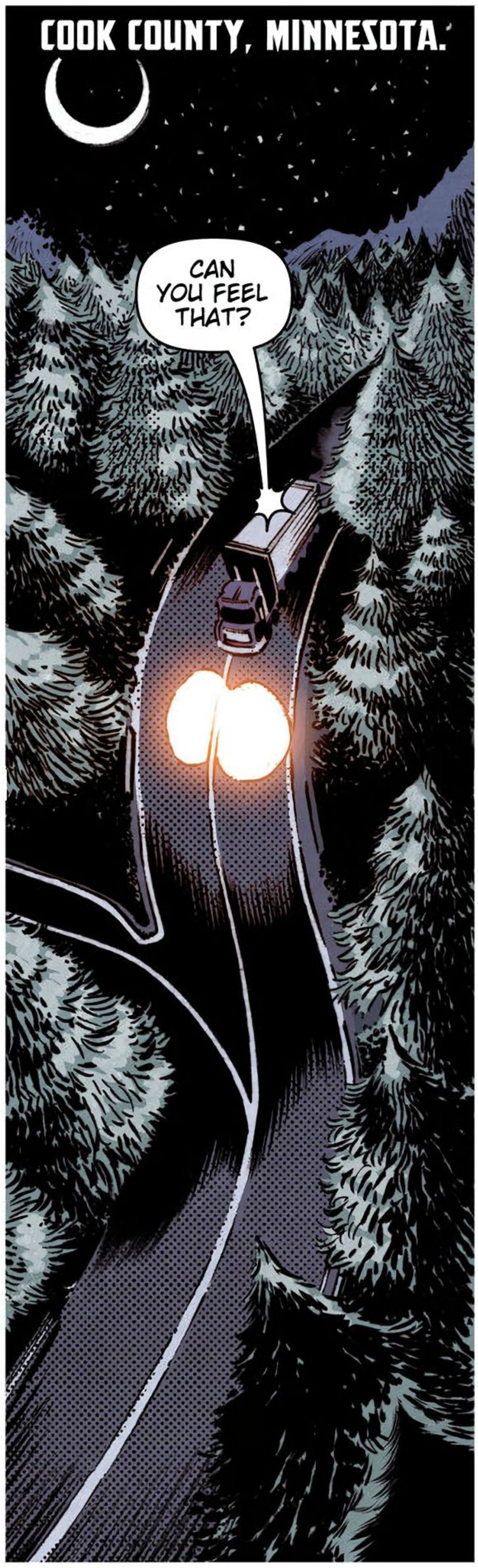

TONIGHT, AFTER ALL, IS THE EQUINOX.


BABYTEETH:
So excited for tonight!
MONGREL:
Same here!!
BABYTEETH:
Been keeping some prime dinning in the freezer for some time. I'm going to be eating good tonight.
MANSKE:
Had some fun stashed for a week. Ready to CUT IT LOOSE tonight.
MONGREL:
I'll send pics later with the offering we have. Had something from Denver stored away just for this.
MANSKE:
HELL YEAH!
LIVESTREAM
LIVESTREAM
SERPENS WILL SOON SLIP OUT OF THE SKY AND WON'T REAPPEAR UNTIL SPRING.

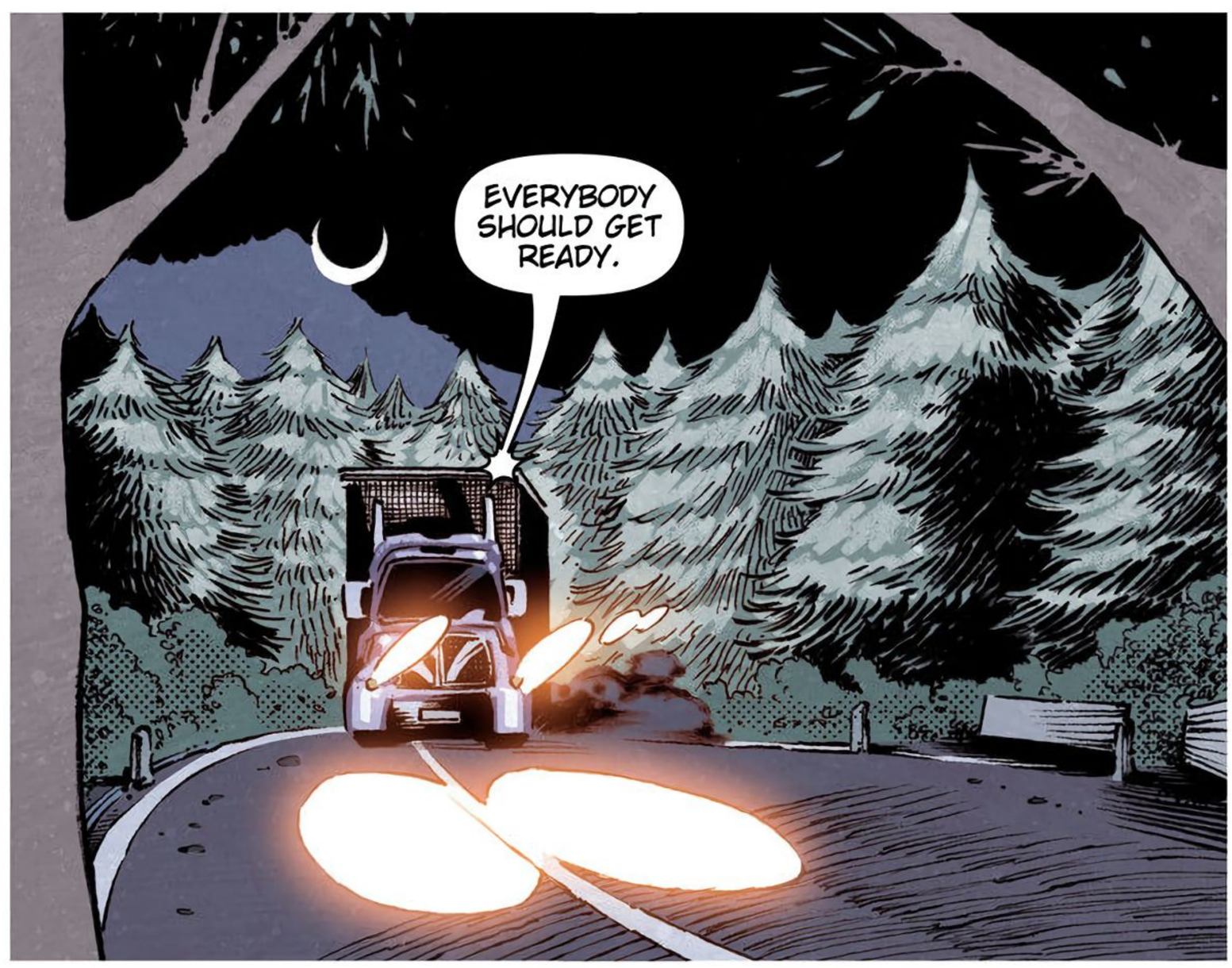
"WE NEED TO MAKE SURE ITS BELLY IS FULL...

"...FOR THE LONG WINTER AHEAD.
"IT'S A TIME OF HARVEST.


"AND CELEBRATION."


COOK COUNTY, MINNESOTA.
CAN YOU FEEL THAT?

HEY. LISTEN TO ME.
WE'RE SLOWING DOWN.

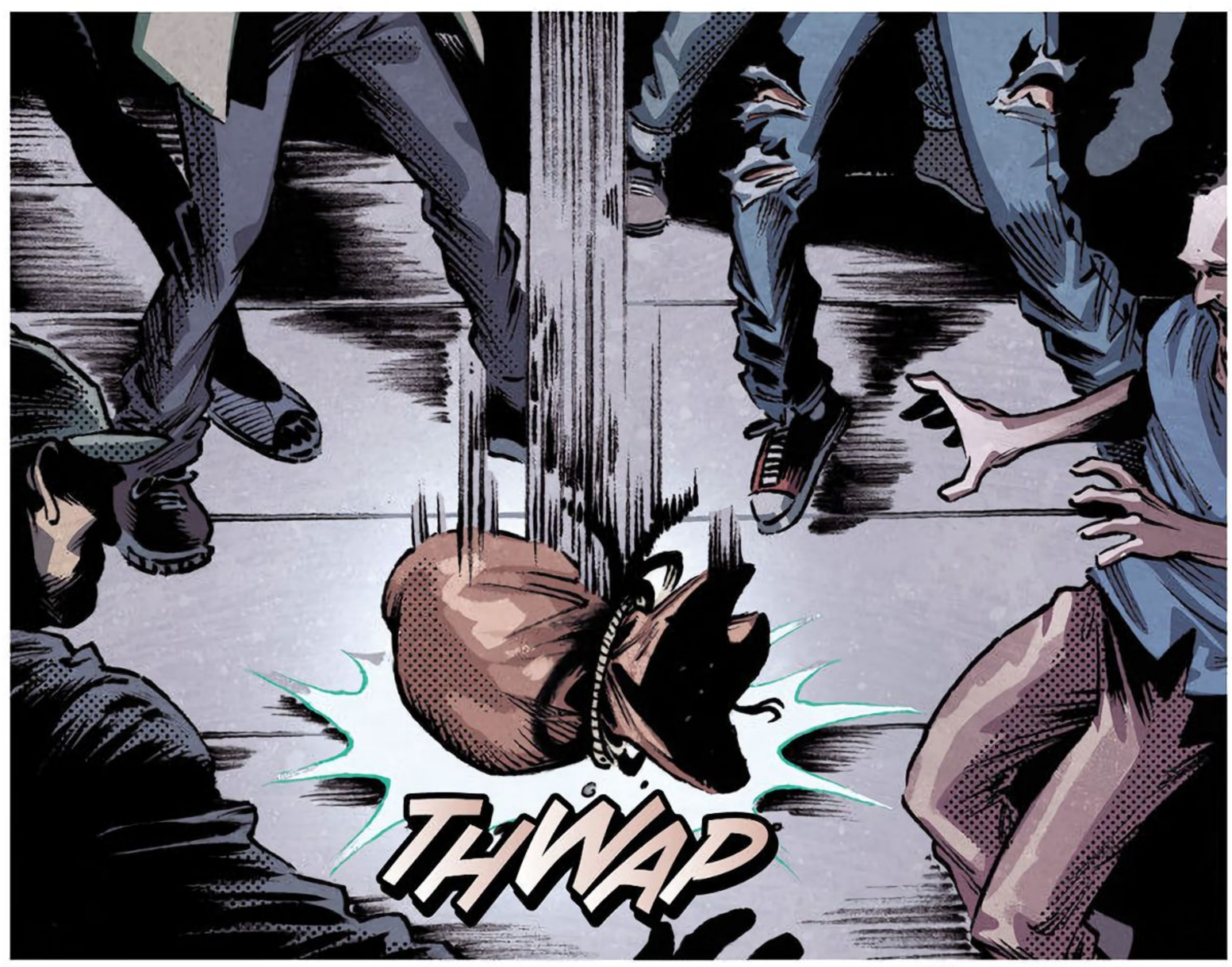

EVERYBODY SHOULD GET READY.

WHEN THAT DOOR OPENS, DON'T HOLD BACK.
THIS IS THE END.

SO FIGHT TOOTH AND NAIL.

DOOM

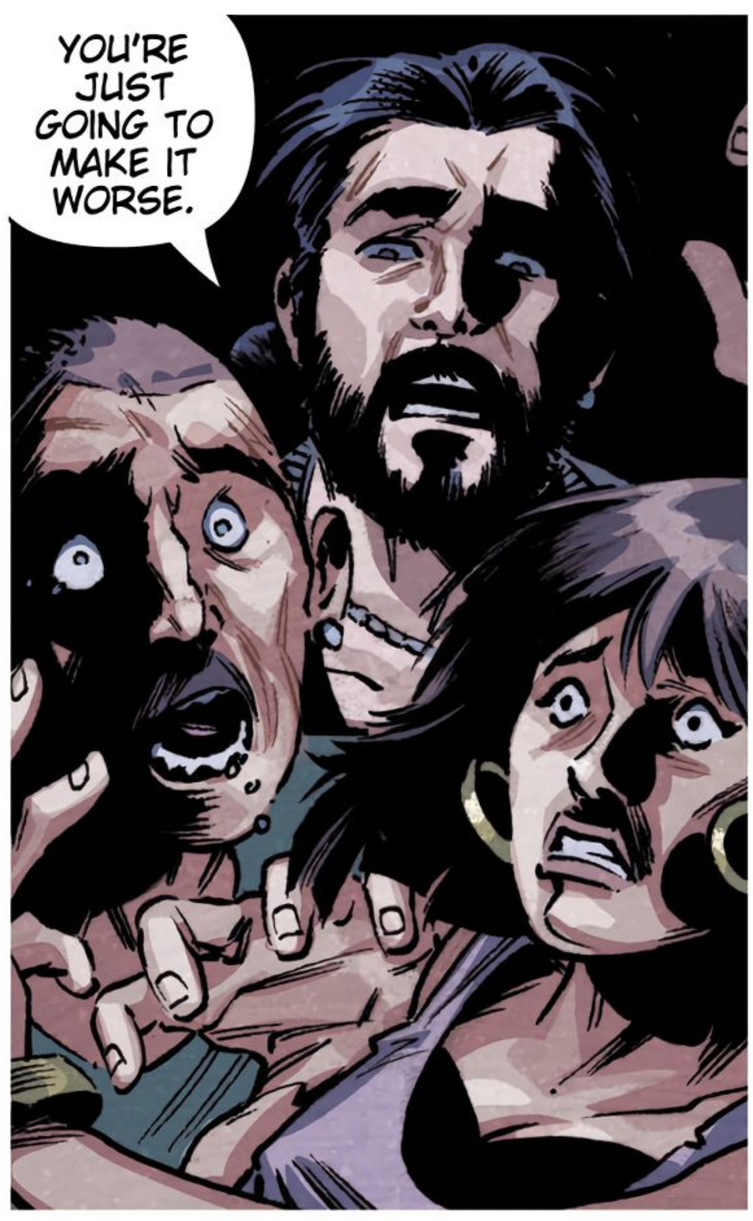
DOOM
SOMEBODY'S ON THE ROOF.


THWAP

HSSSSSSSSSSSSS

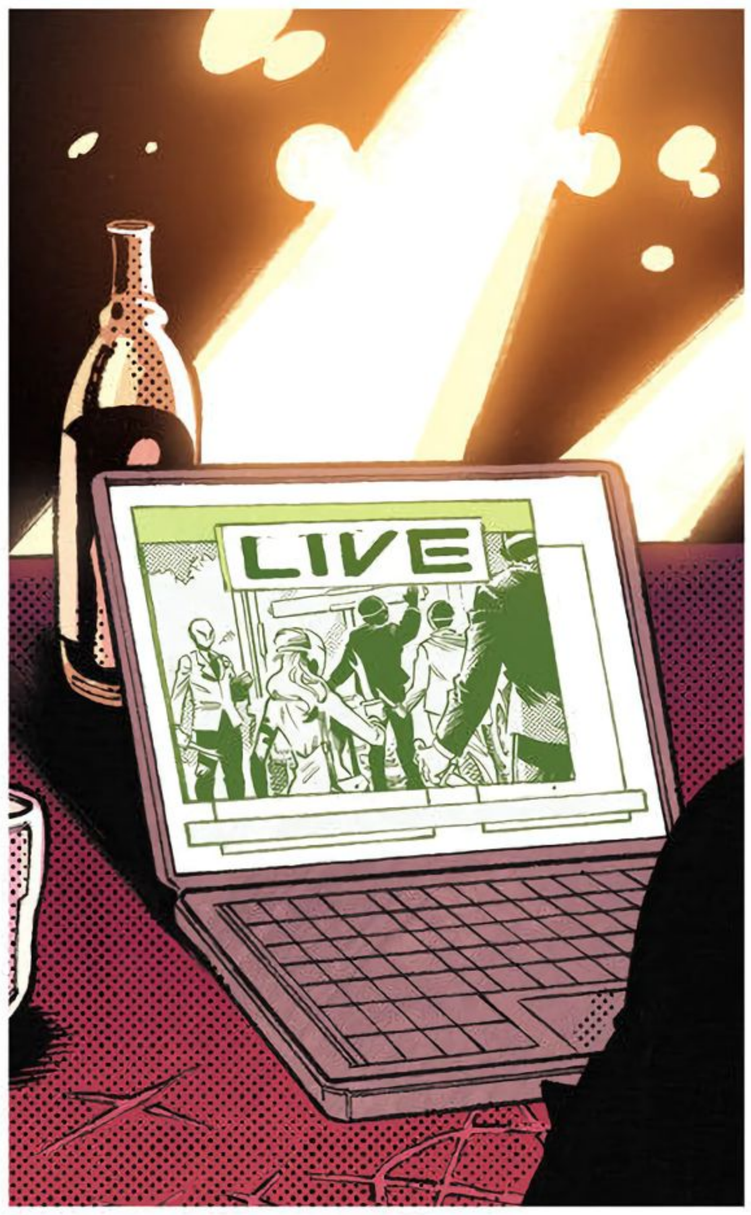
DON'T PANIC.

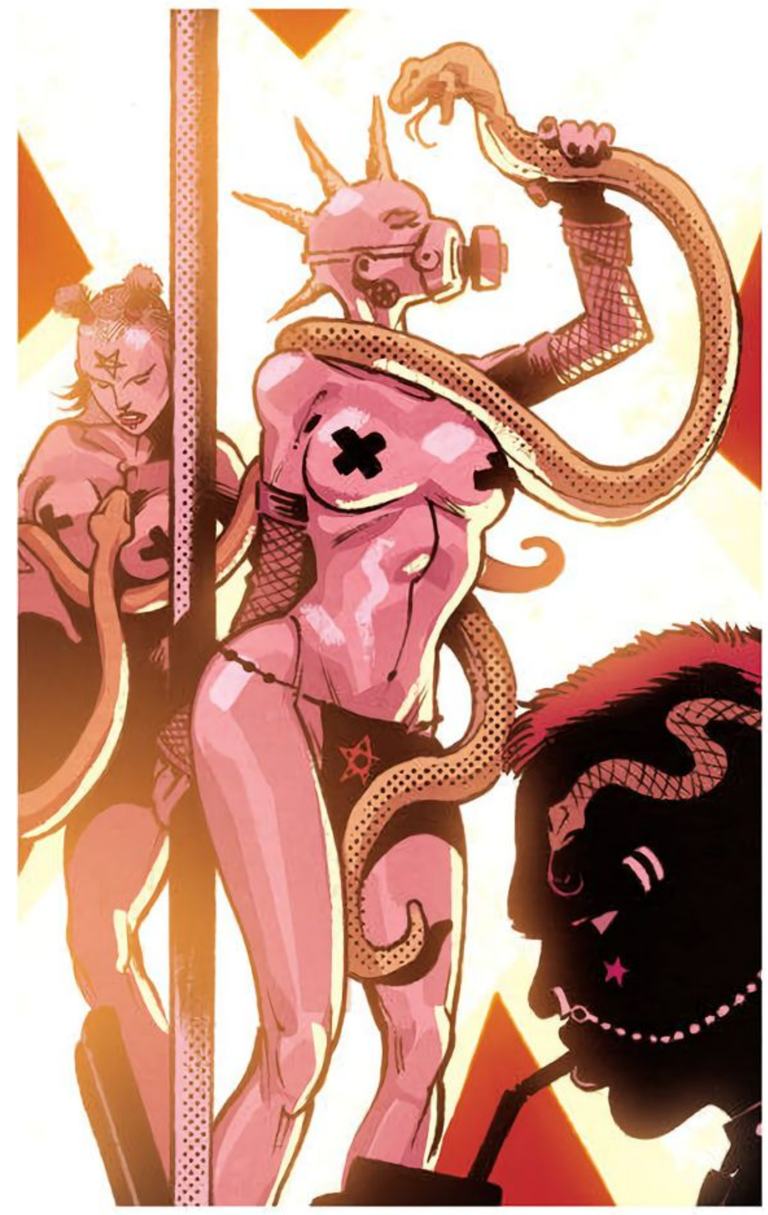
THWAP


YOU'RE JUST GOING TO MAKE IT WORSE.

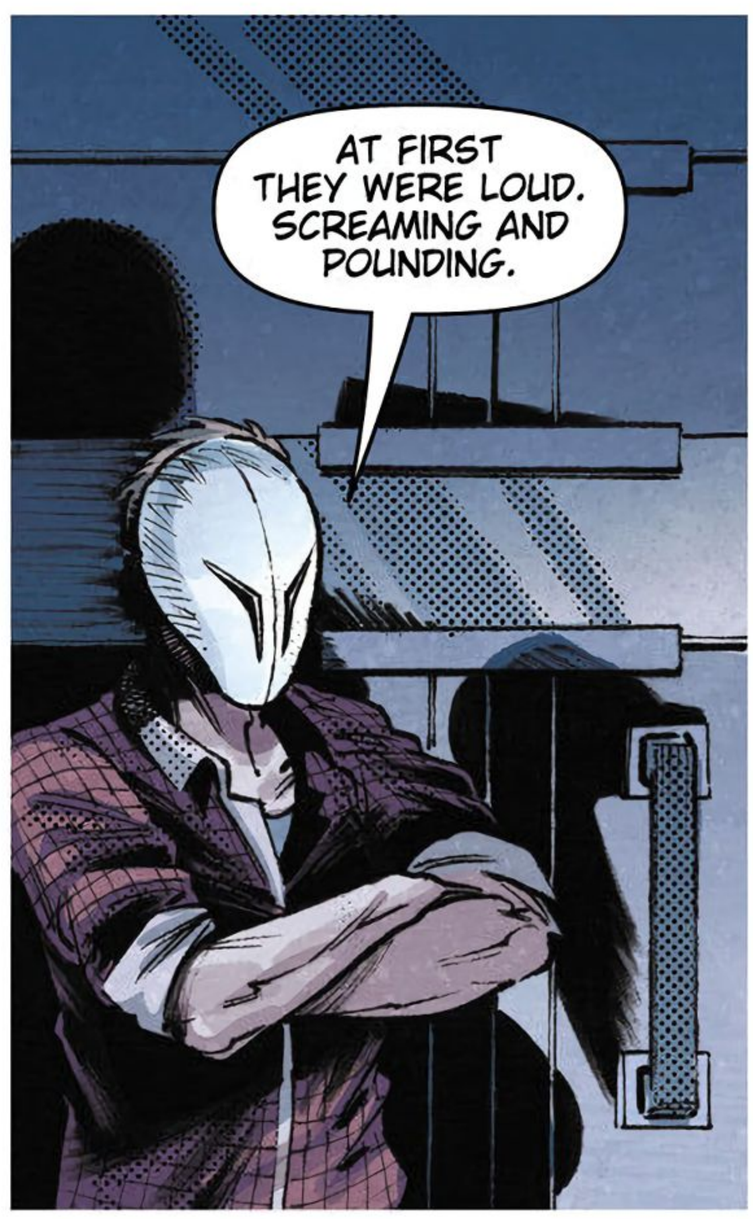
THWAP

PLEASE.


LIVE



ARE THEY READY?


AT FIRST THEY WERE LOUD. SCREAMING AND POUNDING.

BUT THEN THEY GOT REAL QUIET.

THE POISON HAS DONE ITS JOB.

REC

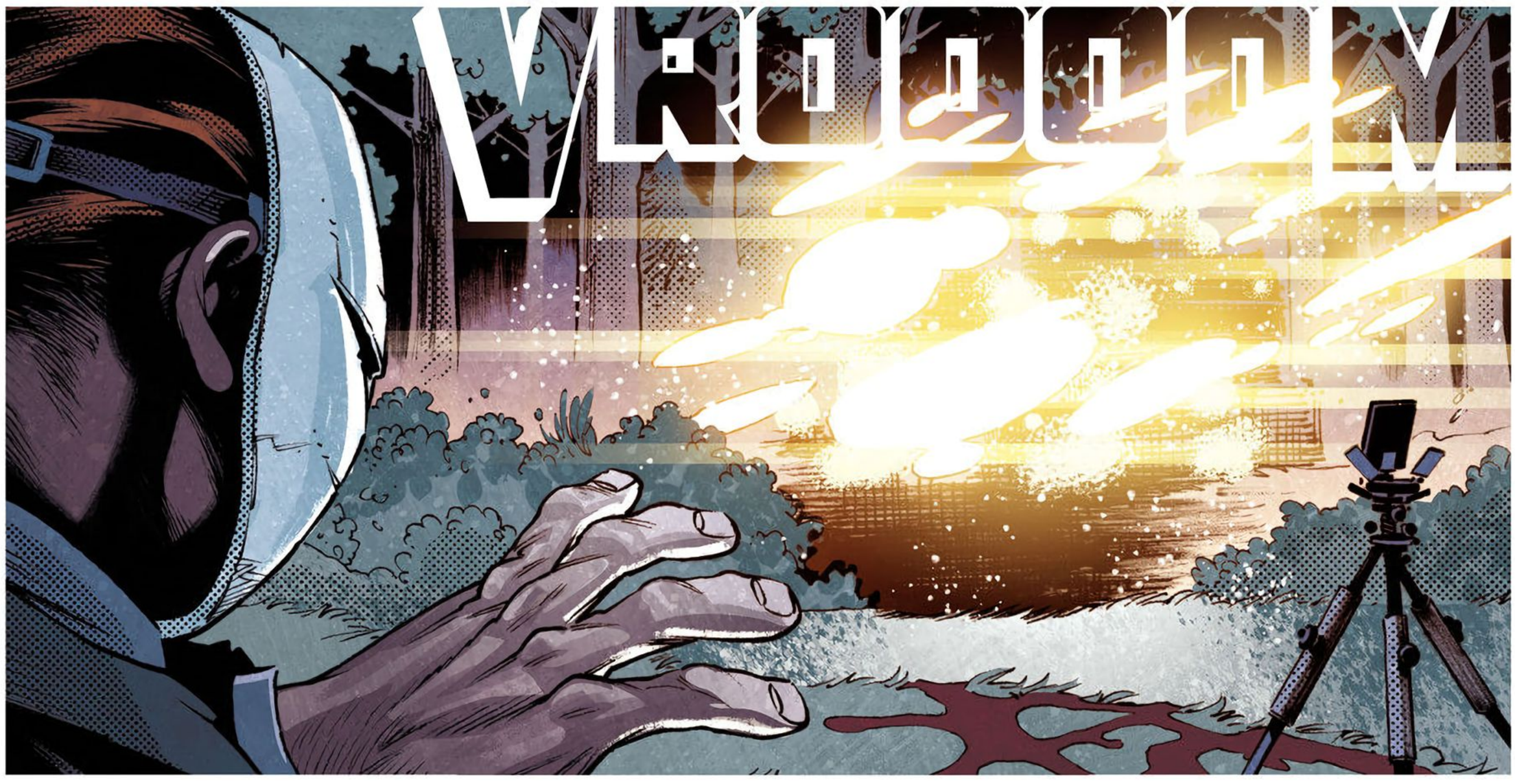
REC

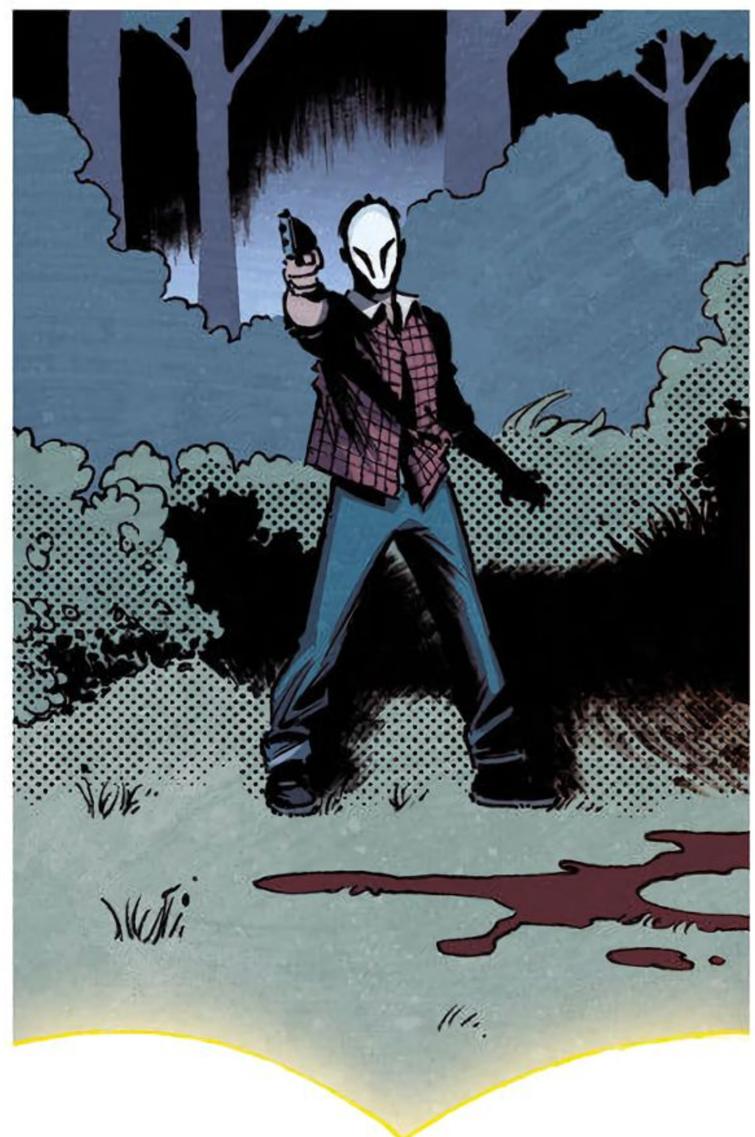
YOU COULD HAVE BEEN A VALUABLE ASSET, SKINNER.

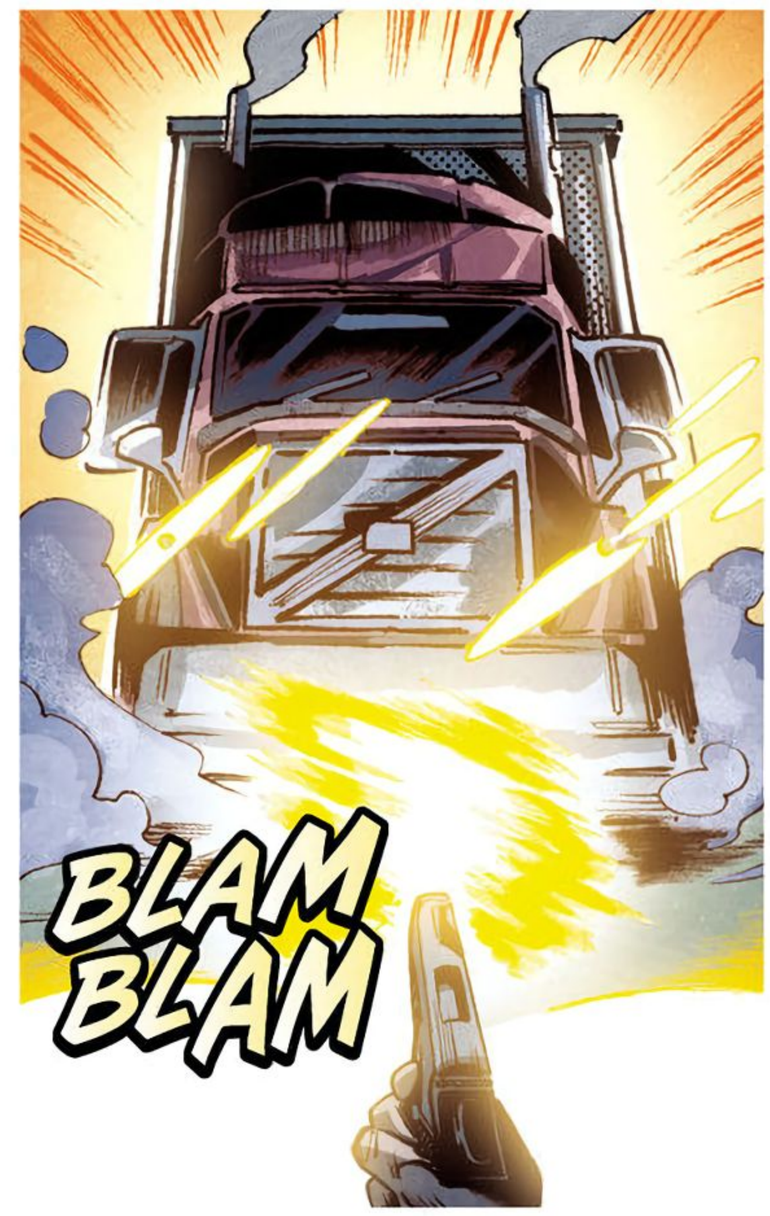
BUT YOUR SACRIFICE IS A NOBLE END.
HEEZ HEEZ

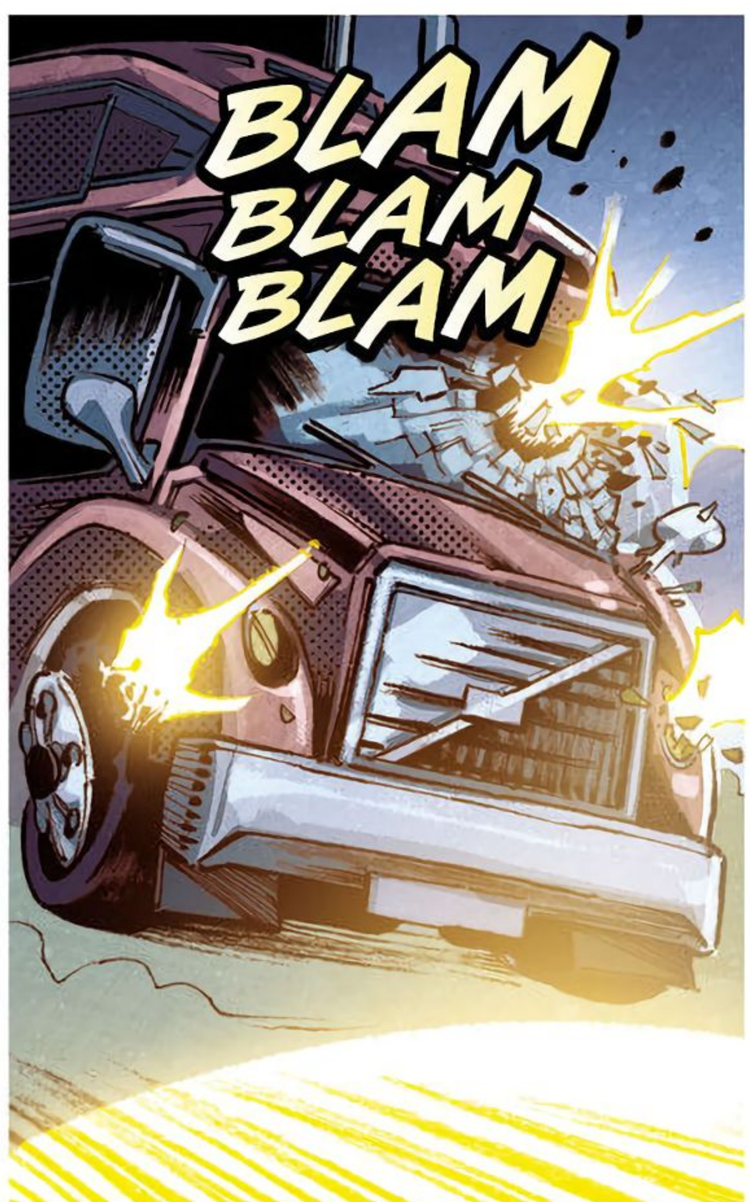
WAIT...

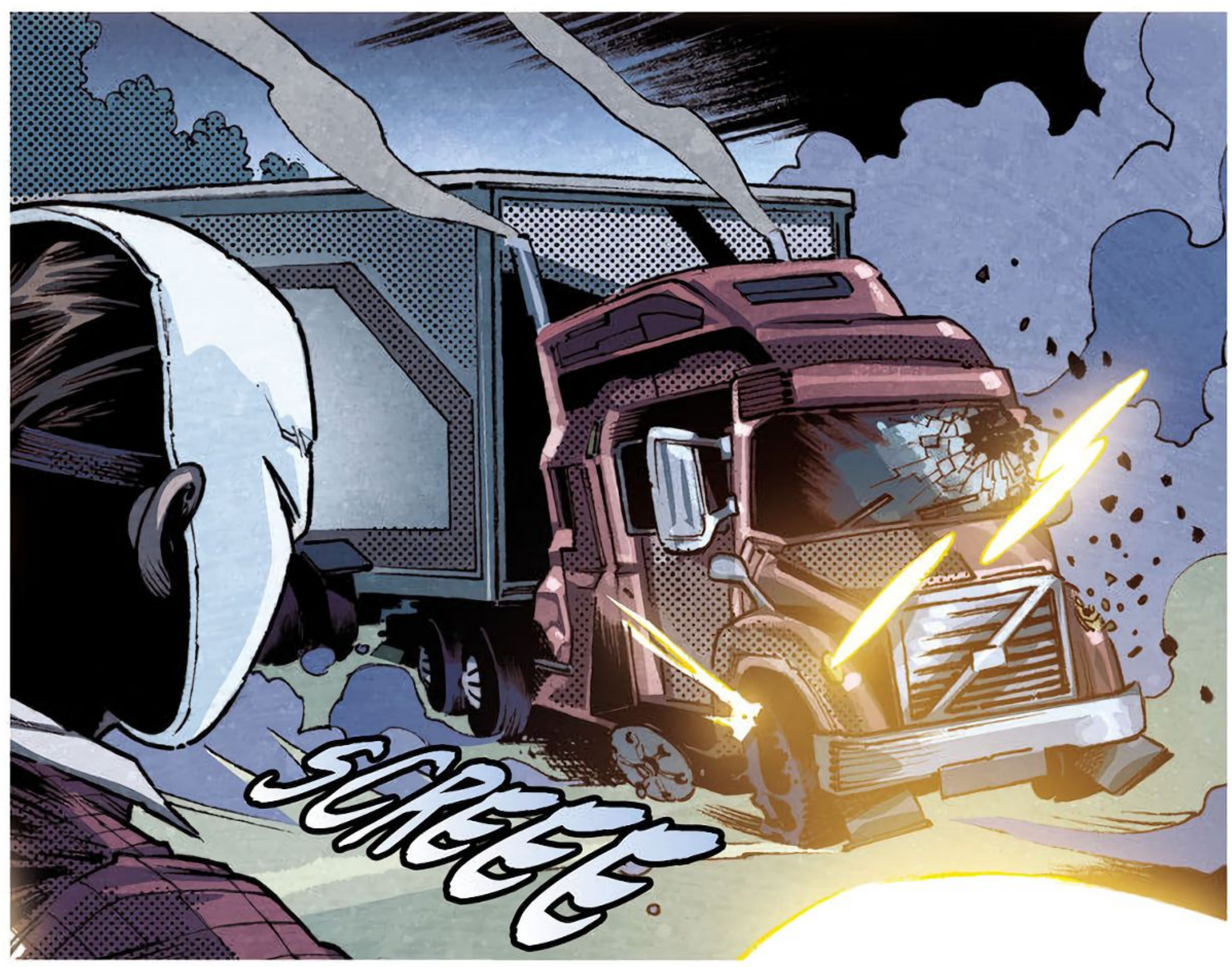
DO YOU HEAR THAT?

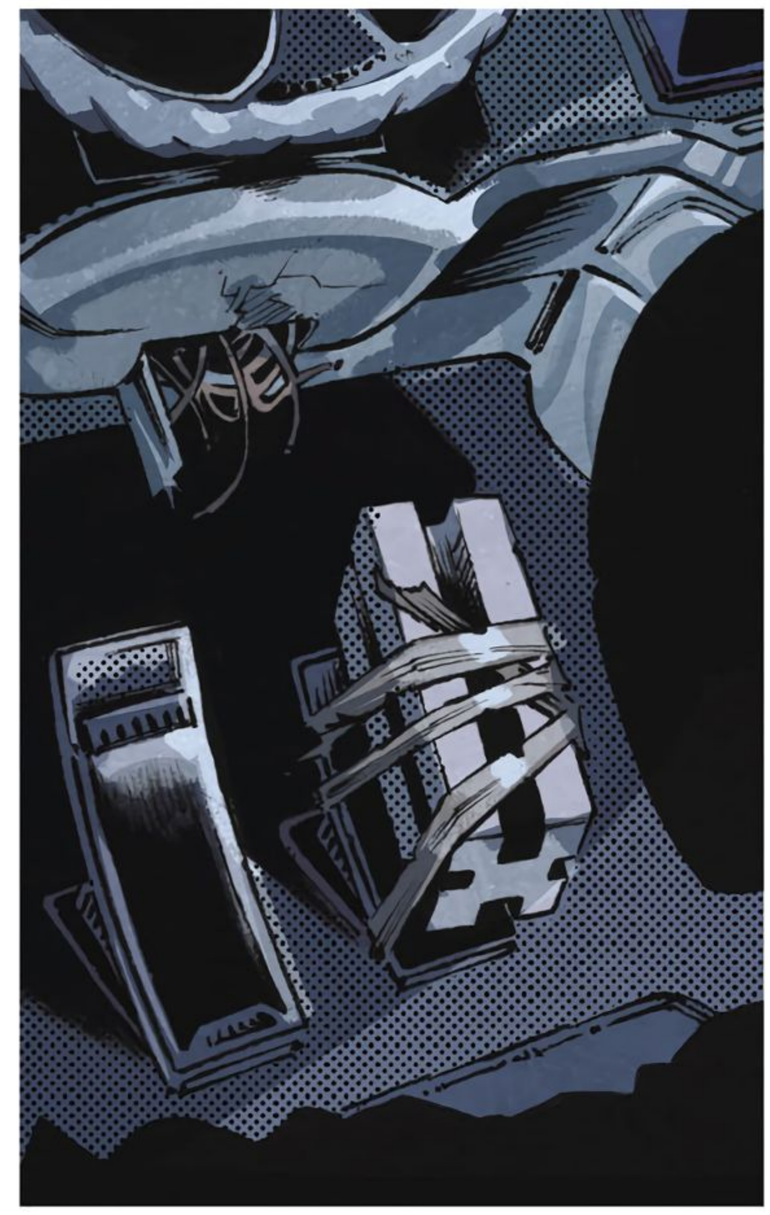

VROOOM




BLAM
BLAM


BLAM
BLAM
BLAM


SCREEE



FRIENDS OF YOURS, I PRESUME?

WHY ARE YOU EVEN BOTHERING TO FIGHT?
IT'S OVER.

NOT YET.

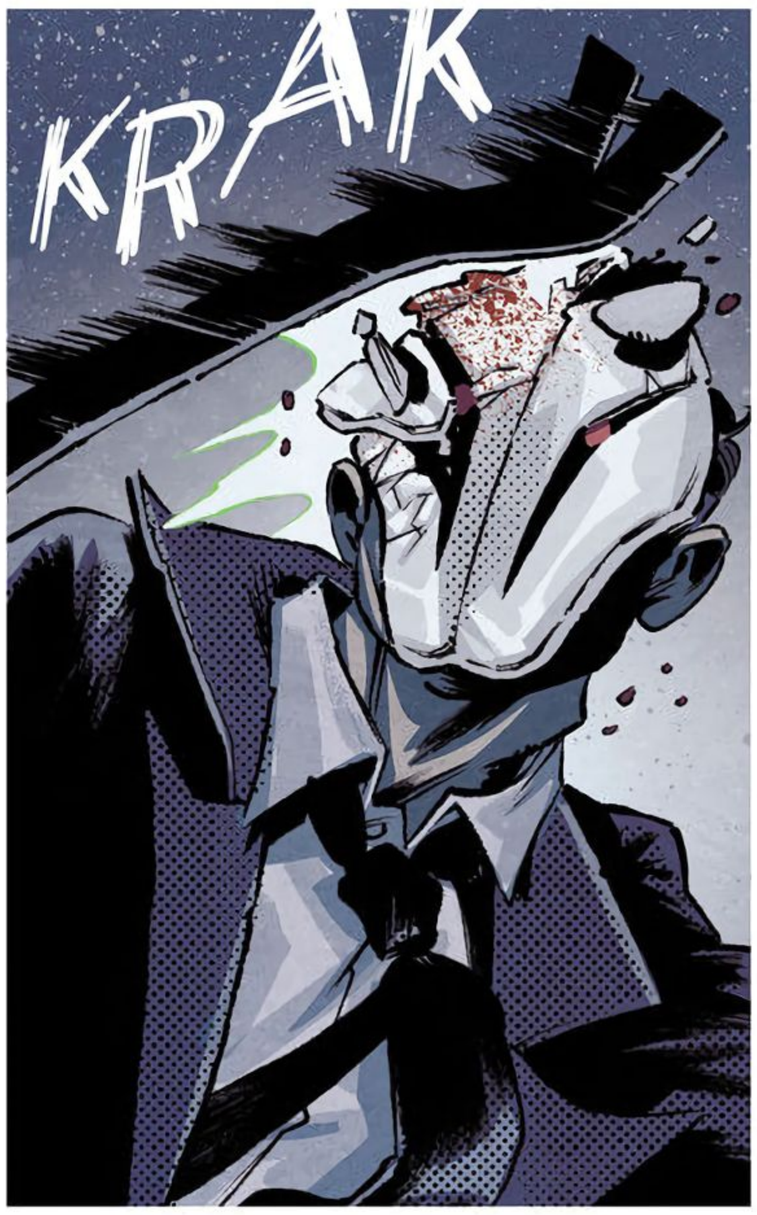
GAA!

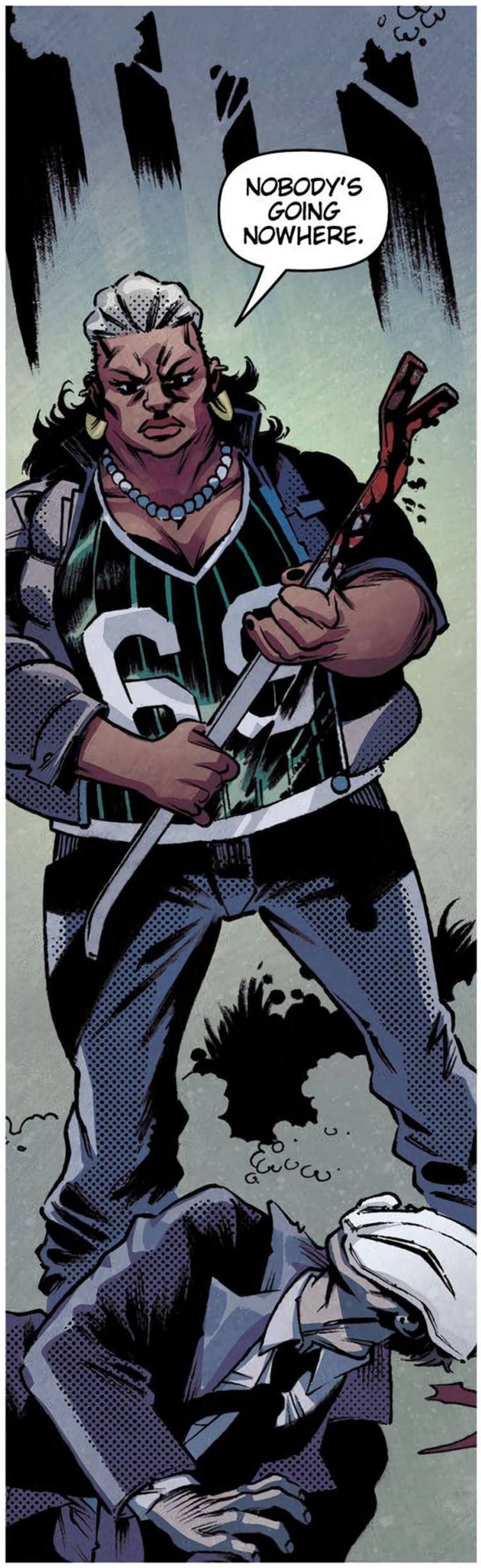
I DIDN'T STOP WHEN MY WIFE LEFT ME...

I DIDN'T STOP WHEN THE FBI FIRED ME...

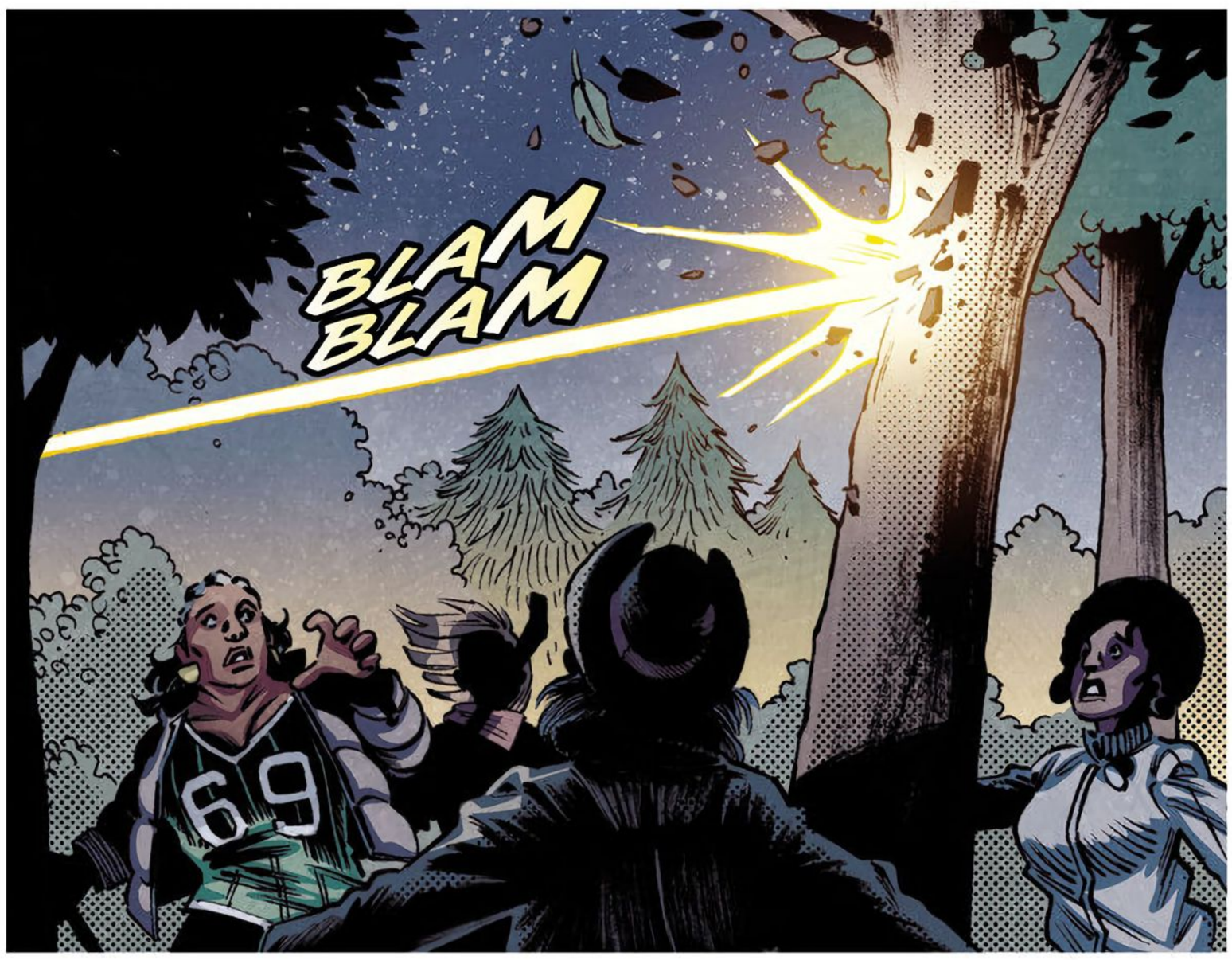
I DIDN'T STOP WHEN MY BANK ACCOUNT DRIED UP AND MY LIVER NEARLY FAILED ON ME...

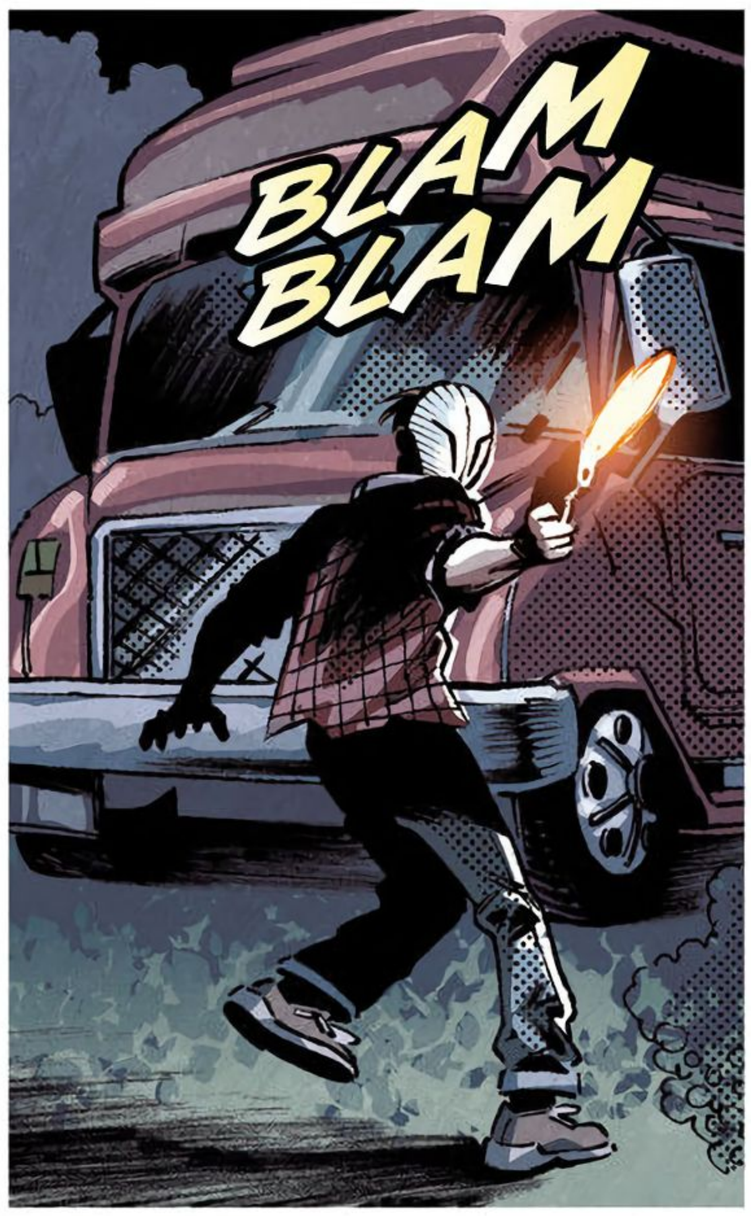
I'LL SEE THIS TO ITS END.

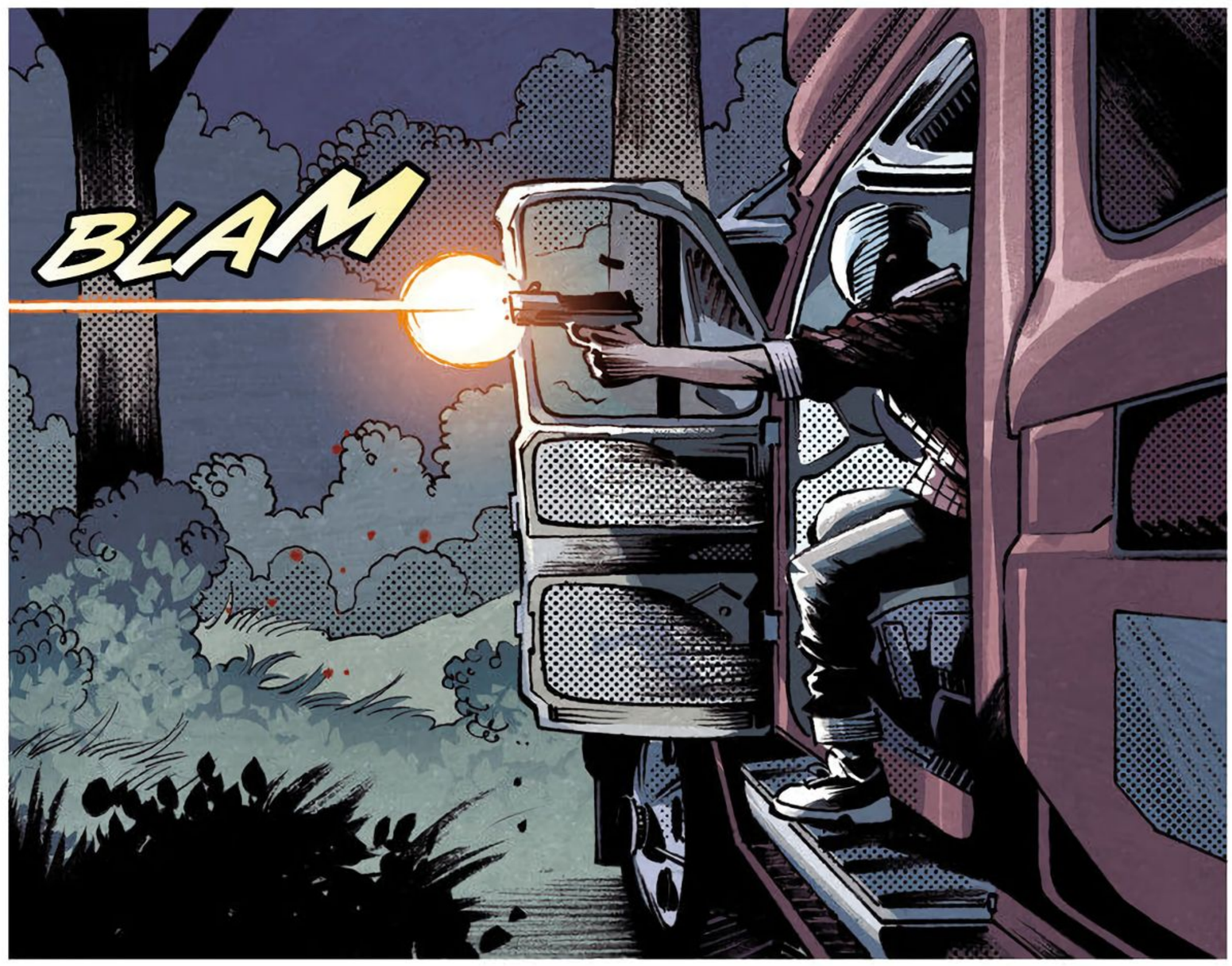

KRAK


NOBODY'S GOING NOWHERE.

THIS HERE'S THE END OF THE ROAD.


BLAM BLAM
69


BLAM
BLAM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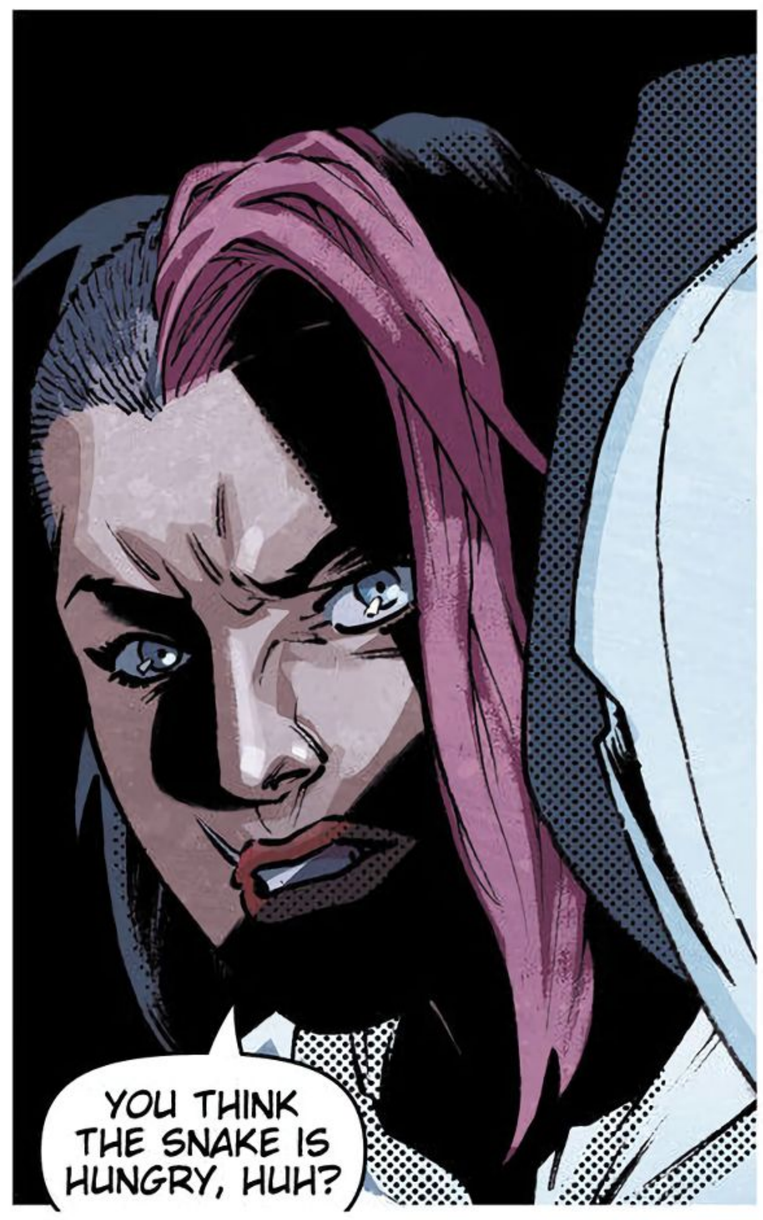
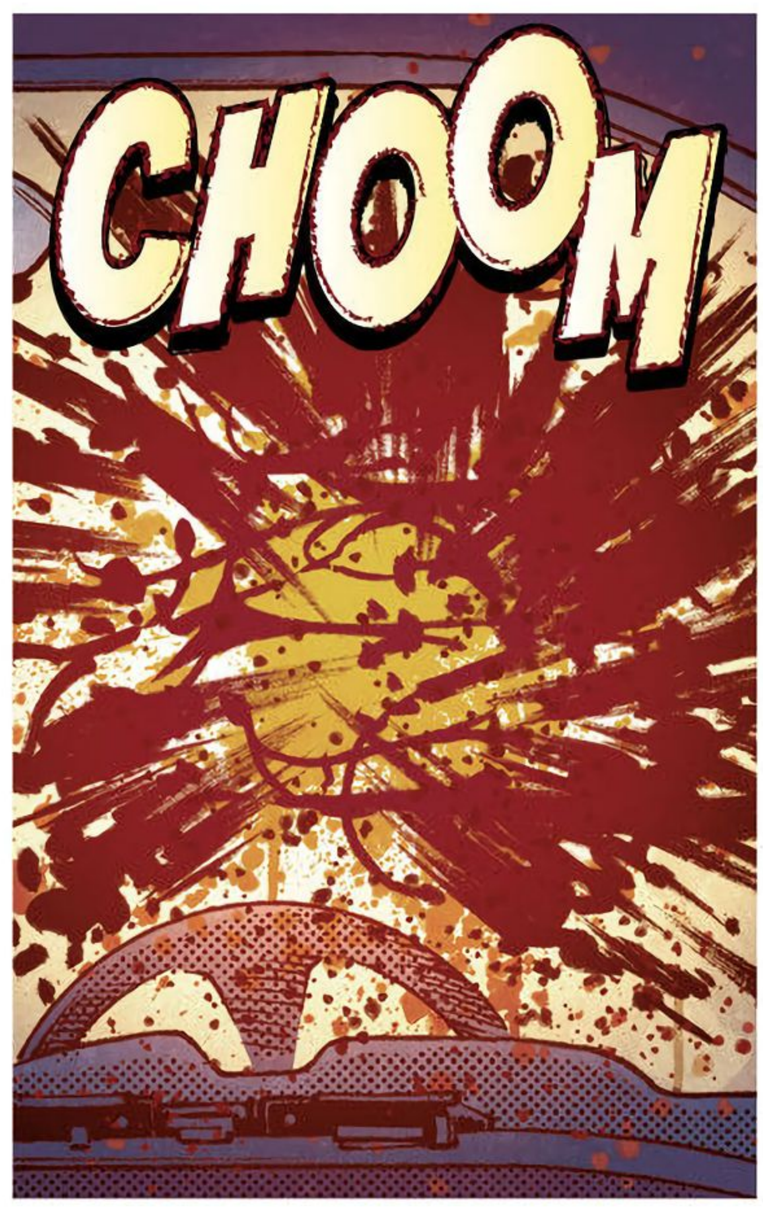
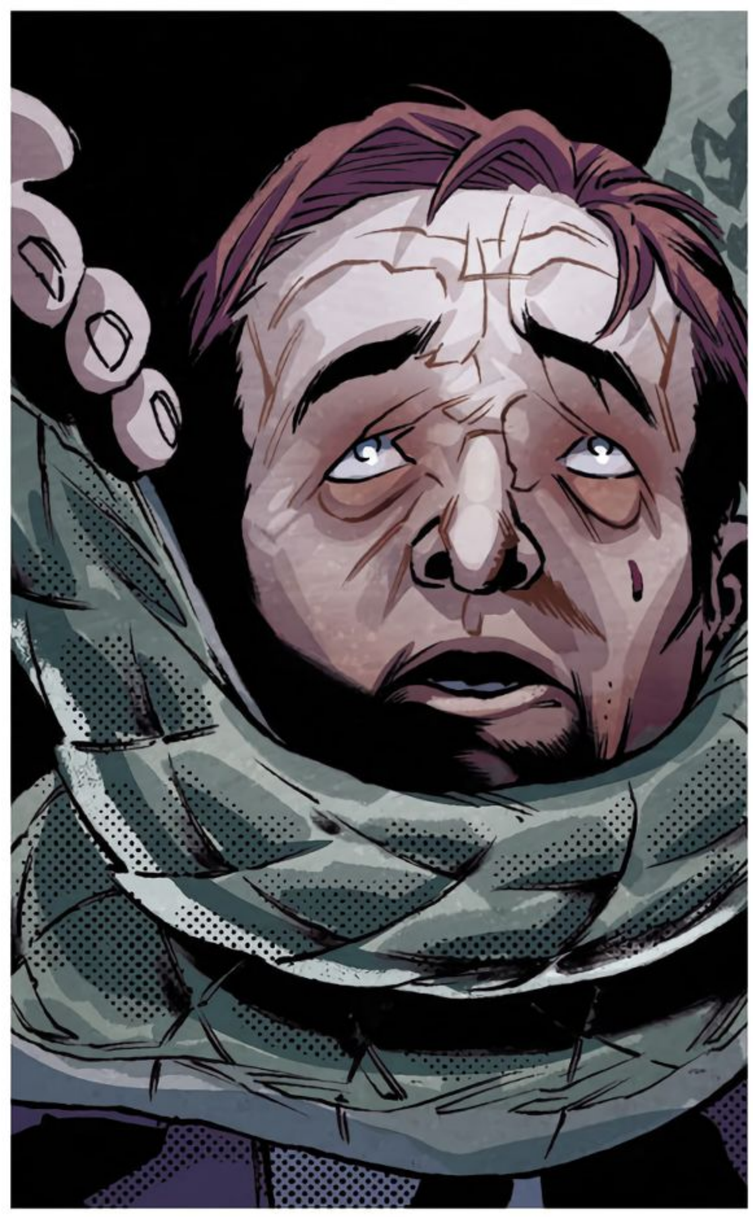

YOU THINK THE SNAKE IS HUNGRY, HUH?

THEN FEED IT.
CHK-CHK


CHOOM

GACK ACK!



HEEZ HEEZ

DEAR SHARON--

IN CASE ANYTHING HAPPENED TO ME...
...I TOLD PANCAKE TO GIVE YOU THIS LETTER.

I USED TO FEEL SO MIXED UP, LIKE MY BRAIN WAS A BROKEN ANTENNA TAKING IN TOO MANY SIGNALS.

WEEKS LATER. DRIFT COUNTY, WISCONSIN.

AND THE VOICES FUNNELING INTO ME WERE ALL BROADCASTING THEIR PAIN.

Filardi
Son. Husband.
A Colorful Life.

AFTER A WHILE, THAT PAIN FILLED ME UP AND TOOK ME OVER.

THEN YOU SHOWED UP.

QUENTIN SKINNER
PARTNER

YOU WERE CARRYING AROUND PAIN TOO--WHOLE FORESTS OF PAIN--BUT YOU DID A BETTER JOB OF MANAGING IT.

YOU DID SO BY SHARING IT WITH THE PEOPLE WHO DESERVED IT.

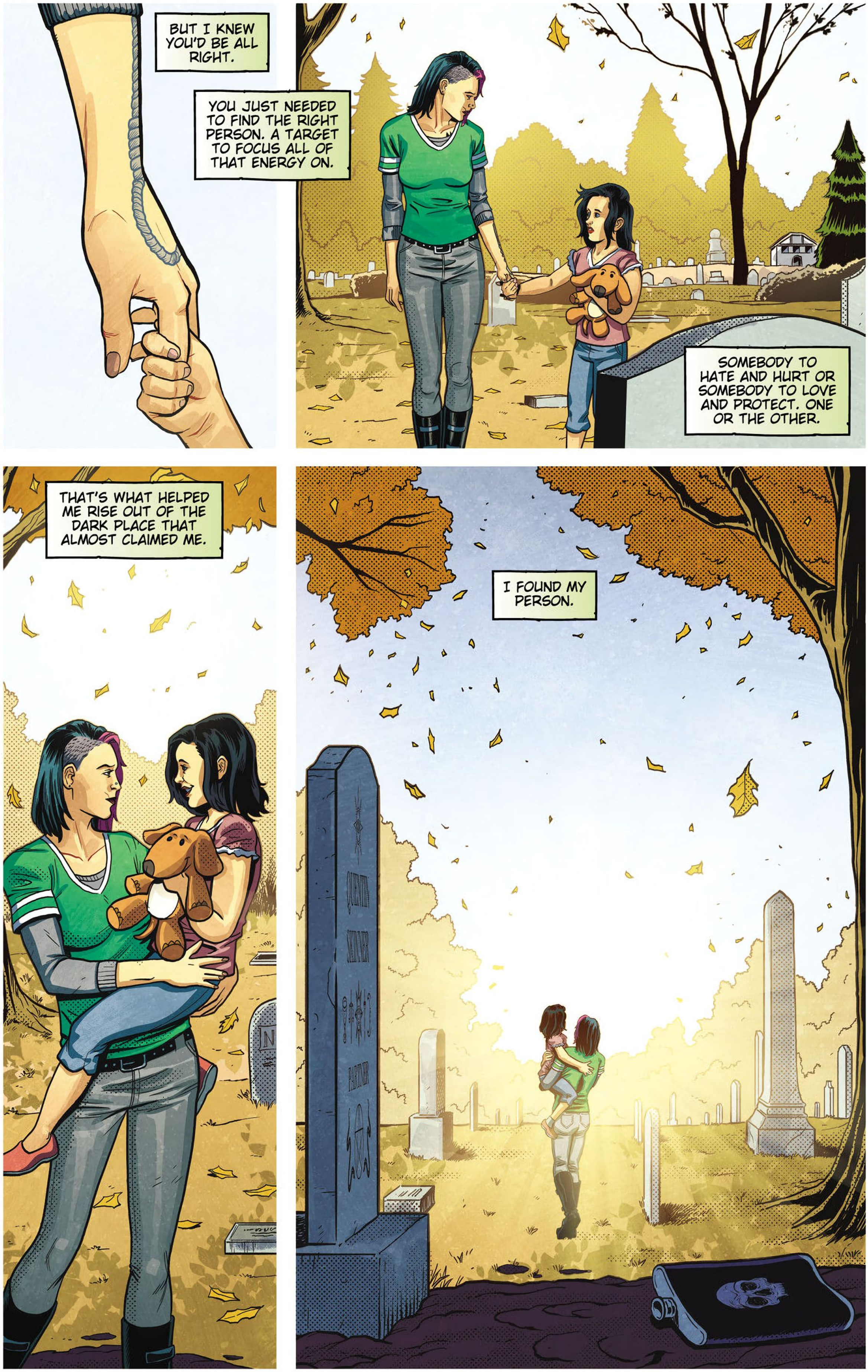
LIKE THE MAN WHO KILLED YOUR FATHER.

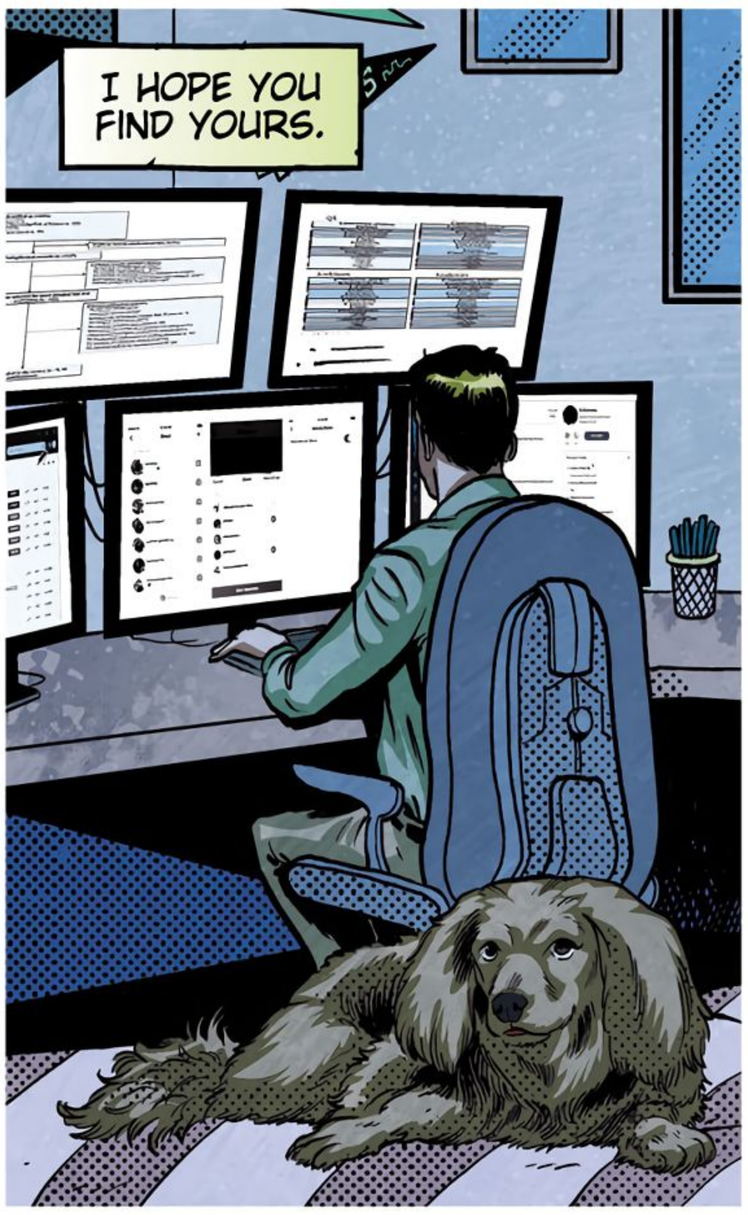
BUT ONCE WE FOUND HIM--ONCE YOU MADE HIM EAT ALL THE PAIN YOU HAD SWALLOWED--YOU DIDN'T SEEM TO KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH YOURSELF.

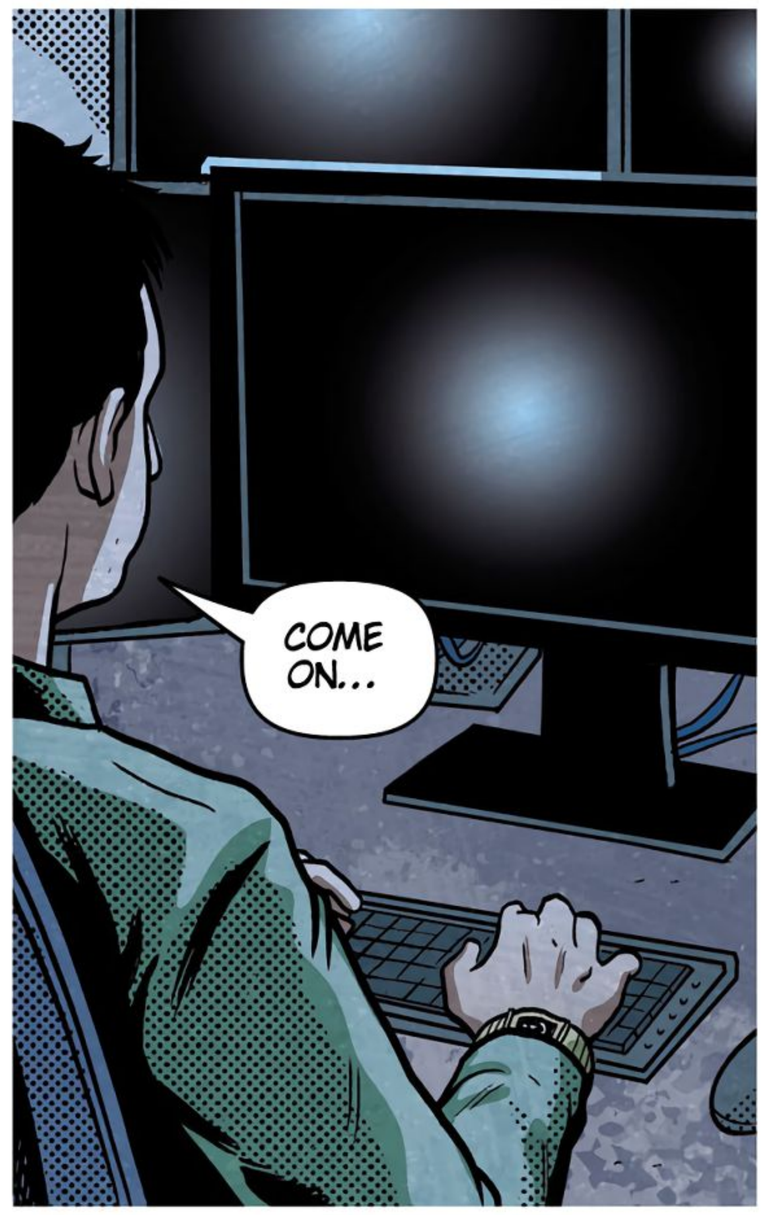
QUENTIN
SKINNER
PARTNER

THE MURDER SYNDICATE WAS STILL OUT THERE, BUT YOU HAD LOST YOUR FOCUS.

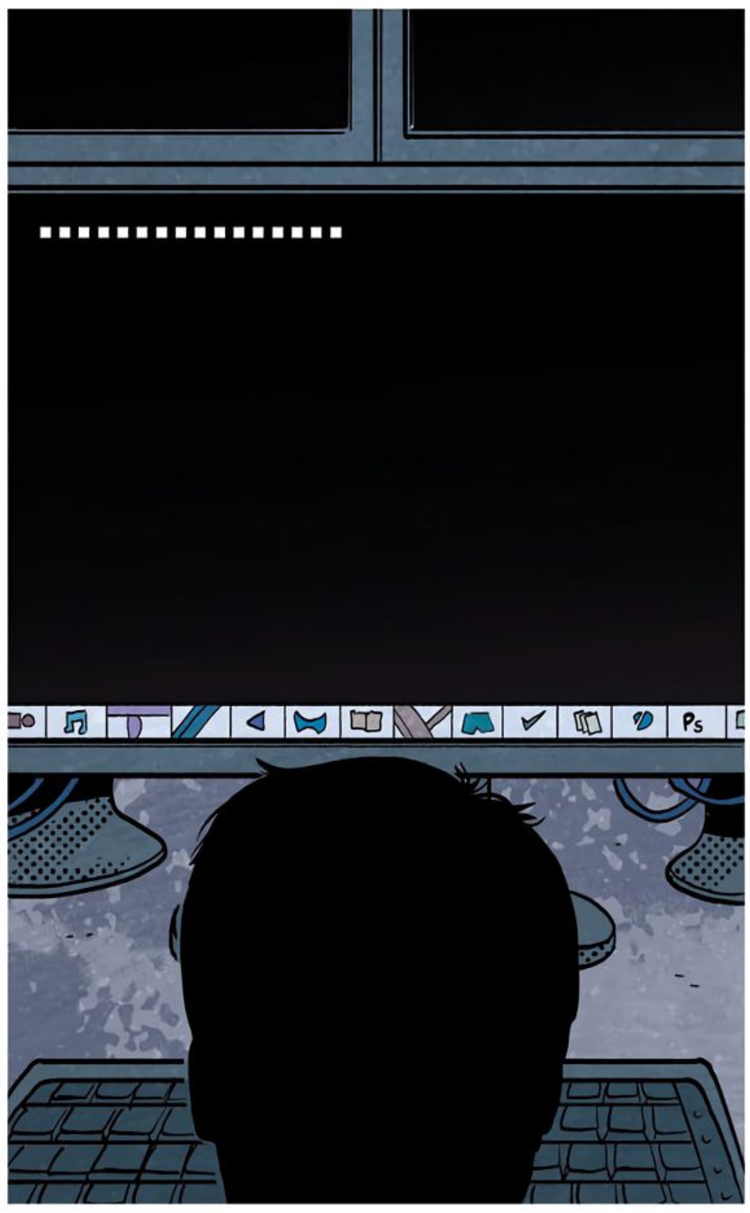
YOU WERE DRINKING A BOTTLE OF WHISKEY A NIGHT, PUNCHING MIRRORS, LASHING OUT AT ANYBODY WHO LOOKED AT YOU SIDEWAYS.


BUT I KNEW YOU'D BE ALL RIGHT.
YOU JUST NEEDED TO FIND THE RIGHT PERSON. A TARGET TO FOCUS ALL OF THAT ENERGY ON.
SOMEBODY TO HATE AND HURT OR SOMEBODY TO LOVE AND PROTECT. ONE OR THE OTHER.
THAT'S WHAT HELPED ME RISE OUT OF THE DARK PLACE THAT ALMOST CLAIMED ME.
I FOUND MY PERSON.


I HOPE YOU FIND YOURS.

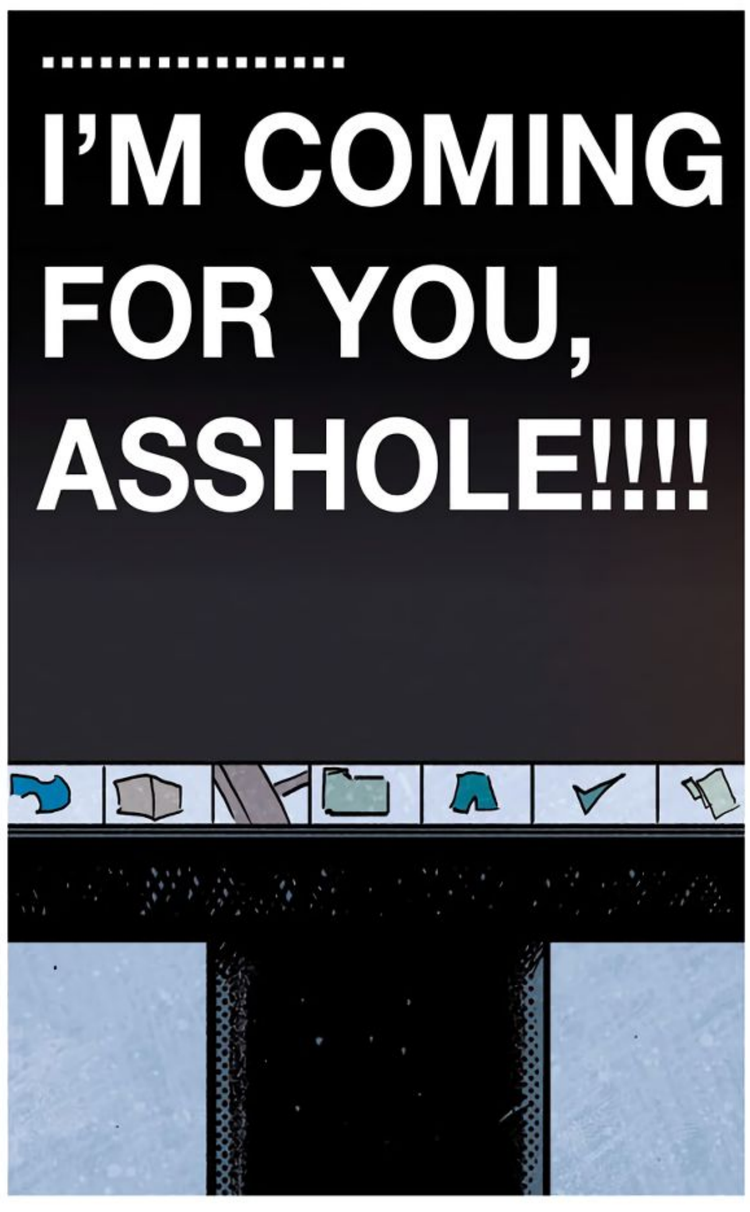

COME ON...

TK TK TK


.....

.....
I'M
THE HELL...?

FOR YOU,
I'M COMING FOR YOU,
I'M COMING FOR YOU,


.....
I'M COMING FOR YOU, ASSHOLE!!!!

THE END

Issue 1 variant by
MIKE DEODATO JR.
and LEE LOUGHRIDGE

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Transmissions received from the creators of Devil's Highway

Nobody talks about the north. Everybody is so fixated on the headline-generating, politically heated line between the United States and Mexico that they seemingly forget about the forested, porous 5,500 miles of border that we share with Canada.

I live in Minnesota. I've camped and canoed the Boundary Waters, and I know how easy it is to paddle and hike from one side to the other. Drug and human traffickers know this too. Maybe you've heard about the frozen family recently discovered here, trying to cross. Or the snowmobile and plane drops that happen under the cover of darkness. Or about the abandoned semi-trailer stacked with the dead bodies of those who hoped to make it to the U.S.

When Brent and I were talking about the second season of *Devil's Highway*, we wanted to get bigger in every way. Crank up the terror and suspense, speed up the action, elevate the stakes, and broaden the conspiracy. The murder syndicate is now international–and its dark influence has soaked into some of the institutions meant to guard us, including the Border Patrol and FBI.

Buckle up. Dark highways await you.

– Benjamin Percy

In the late 90's I was running down a parking lot as fast as I possibly could at about 4 a.m. A police car was right behind me. My friends and I were up to some stupid teenage trouble when the police rained on our parade. I only made it about 50 yards before another squad car came from the other end of the parking lot, the one I was running towards. And with that, my extremely short stint of running from the law was over just as quickly as it began. In that short 50 yard sprint I felt about as many emotions as one can truly feel being hunted. Excitement, fear, desperation, and the simple need to escape, or more specifically…survive.

To me that's a lot of what Volume Two of *Devil's Highway* is about. Sharon and Skinner took it to these serpents in Volume One. They feel good about themselves, and that confidence has them continuing on their journey. But they really don't understand just how big this snake den is. They don't see the cop car coming at the other end of the parking lot. But they are about to. And they are going realize in order to survive they are going to have to do things differently than they have in the past. They are going to have to trust in themselves and the people they meet along the way. Which is a tricky thing when it seems like everyone they meet on this road wants them dead. I loved Volume One of this story, but to me this chapter is our *Empire Strikes Back*. The stakes are higher now. We meet new allies and we meet new villains on this road trip. Some may not make it. I just hope they get a little farther than I did in that parking lot.

– Brent Schoonover

PROCESS REPORT

Issue 1, Page 17, from script to finished art

Devil's Highway
Volume 2, Issue 1
Benjamin Percy

PAGE 17

Panel 1

Sharon slams into Casey, tackling him at the belly.

He loses his grip on the shotgun as he begins to fall.

Panel 2

On the ground she begins to strike him as he flails wildly

Panel 3

She punches him again, bloodying her knuckles.
GIRL (op) : <Please.>

Panel 4

Sharon hears the voice and pauses her fist, looking up incredulously.

GIRL: <Please don't hurt him.>

Panel 5

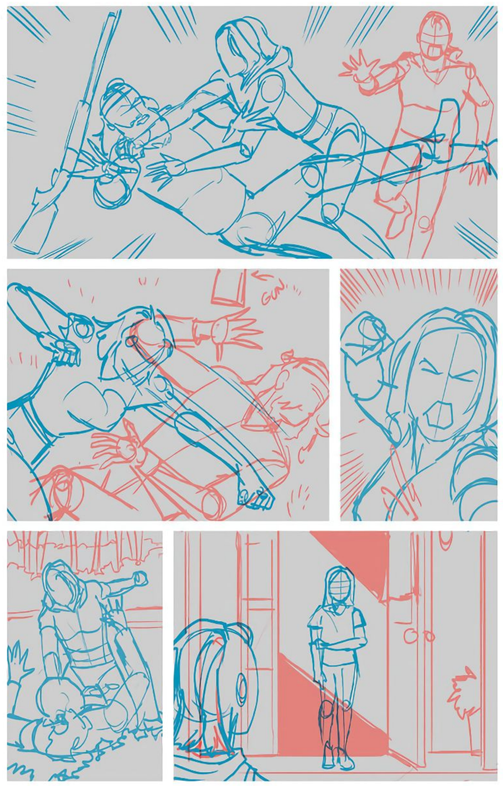
Skinner stands in shock beside Sharon, maybe reaching for her…

…as Sharon remains crouched over the survivalist but stares ahead…

…at the girl…the girl from the beginning…

She stands on the porch of the cabin. Watching them fearfully.

GIRL: <He saved me.>



Script by Benjamin Percy

Layouts by Brent Schoonover

Inks by Brent Schoonover

Colors by Nick Filardi and
letters by Sal Cipriano

AR Comics Exclusive
Issue 1 variant by
JAVAN JORDAN

DR. VINK

WITH A VA-VA-VA

A Dr. Vink Poor Man's RIP

~ RIPPIN POORLY SINCE MAY 2022 ~

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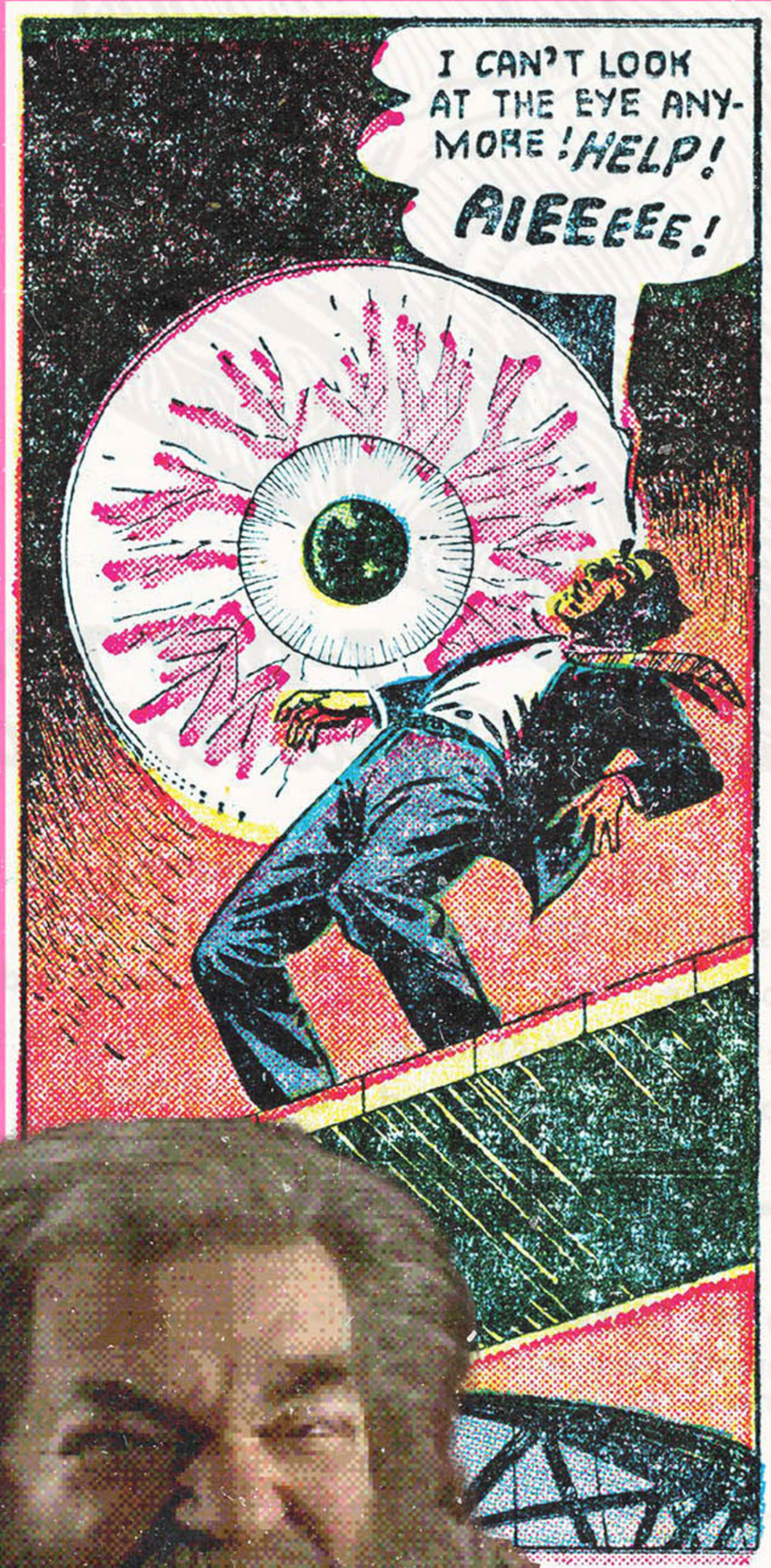

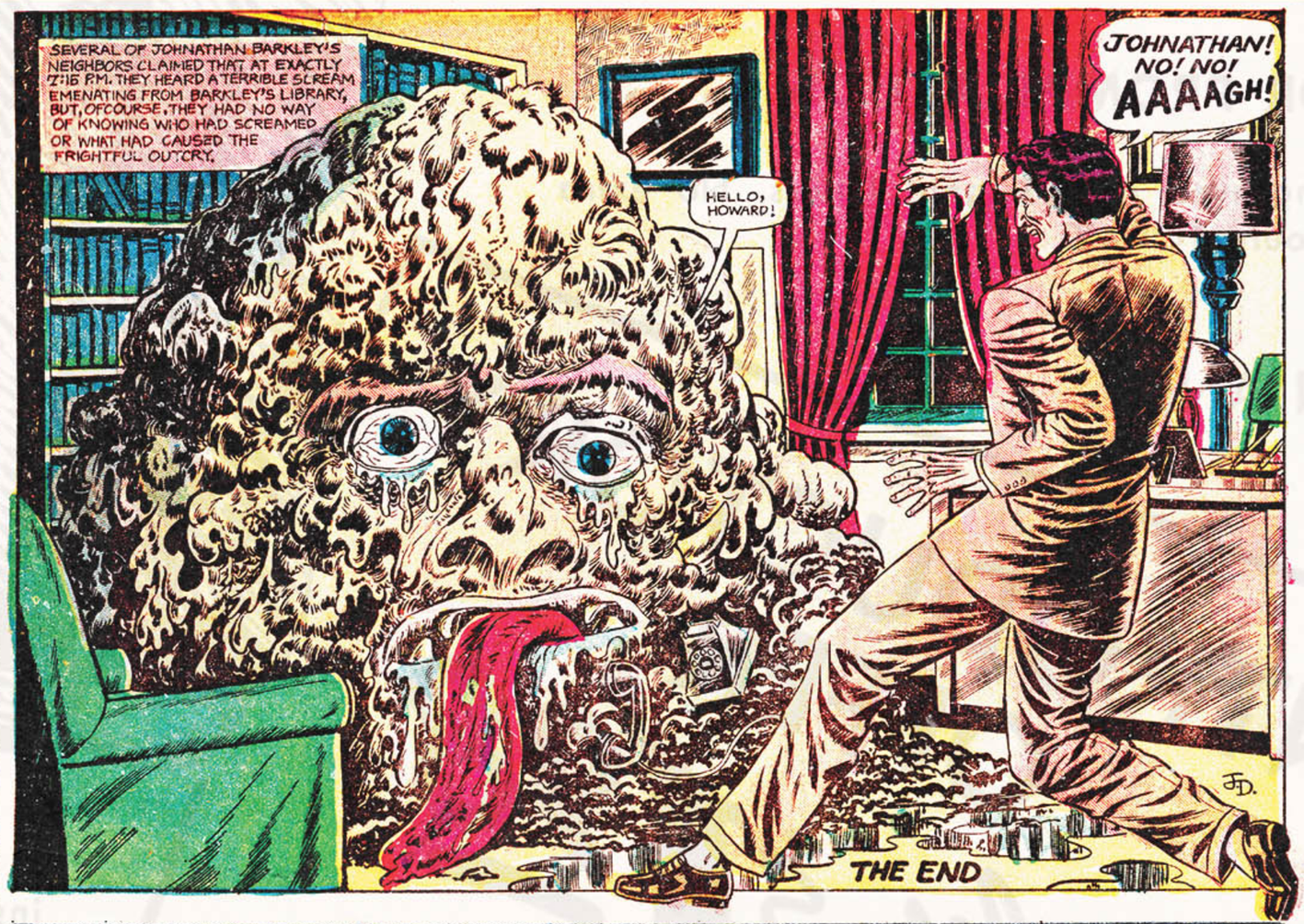

...AND I AM NOT A NUT BAG

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